

THE
FASHIONABLE CYPRIAD:
IN A *K*
SERIES OF ELEGANT AND INTERESTING
LETTERS,
WITH
CORRELATIVE ANECDOTES
OF
THE MOST DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS
IN
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

—◆—
The Trav'ler, if he chance to stray,
May turn unceasur'd to his way;
Polluted streams again are pure,
And deepest wounds admit a cure;
But Woman!—no redemption knows,
The wounds of honor—never close.

MOORE.

—◆—
PART I.

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M, DCC, XCVIII.

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THE

FASHIONABLE CYPRIAD,

LETTER I.

THE basis of friendship on which we have so long and firmly stood, easily resolves me to comply with your request.

But think not, that *pleasure* will be the sole actuating spring of my correspondence;—no, it is my design to probe the avenues of pleasure, that I may discover and expose the thorns which environ them. Pleasure I have eagerly pursued, but in the pursuit I have also been crossed by contemplation, and which has produced both pensiveness and *instruction*. On this

B

my

my varied journey, I have just distinguished *Honor*, like a shadow, flitting through some span-breadth defile; and as I have cast my eager eye on the enamelled side of *Pleasure's* flowery ascent, I have also discovered *reflection* shrink, like the sensitive plant, as the thorn pressed upon her, through the ambrosial beds of roses.

Do not imagine, because these *Letters* carry with them the *Title* of "*The Fashionable Cypriad*," that they shall convey with them one immoral or indelicate implication.—No, so contrary is *their* complexion and so different is *my* view, that I will endeavour, as far as my humble capabilities will allow, to render them not only the vehicle of information and instruction, but also to tint them with that chaste, delicate, and nervous colouring, as shall neither offend or wound the eye, ear, or feelings of the nicest modesty. It is my ambition, that they may encounter the view of the most dignified and accomplished of the fair; that the subject may induce them to sympathize and feel such
pity

pity for that unfortunate part of their sex, whose beauty has led to their destruction: thereby supporting and giving them a claim and title rather to their tenderness and commiseration, than their obloquy and detestation.

“ Nought is there under Heav’n’s wide hollowness
“ That moves more dear compassion of the mind,
“ Than beauty brought t’unworthy wretchedness.”

When beauty and poverty go hand in hand, the chance of the die is a hundred against them, if they do not fall the early victims of artifice and seduction. How rarely do we find, that beauty—rendered still more beautiful in the eager eye of roving lust, when arrayed in the simple, artless garb of innocence and poverty, for

“ ————— fairer she,
“ In innocence and homespun vestments spread,
“ Than if cærulean sapphires at her ears
“ Shone pendant, or a precious diamond cross
“ Heav’d gently on her panting bosom white,”

How seldom, I say, is it found, that the allurements of wealth,—the promised gaudy equipage,—with the insidious advances of a man, practiced in intrigue,—fail in conquering uncultivated innocence and beauty. The deed is accomplished,—the unthinking fair one yields to their insinuations:—What succeeds?—she is momentarily caressed, the novelty vanished, she as momentarily becomes loathed. She now stands as a *cruel* obstacle to the attainment of fresher beauties. From her seducer's hands, she is transferred to those of a procuress, and if good fortune stands not her friend, (*and here I must digress, by observing, that in instances where fortune had not in some substantial shape, stood the child of seduction's friend, that pity denies their being enrolled here*): Then what?—why, for a short time she is fed like the silkworm on the flagrant mulberry leaf; and, when she has spun her yellow brilliant web of silk, she becomes the brothel's vile, common *grub*, and in the next last state, she shakes her trembling emaciated wings; and now having answered the full purposes

poses of her short, hapless destiny, lowly she droops and flutters, 'till death relieves her from an accumulated mass of misery and corruption, ere three transient summers have passed o'er her unhappy head.

Oh! in what a various, complicated light, do mankind view seduction. The sworn friend will often attempt to corrupt his *own friend's* sister, who having a sister himself, would deal destruction on that man who prospered in the ruin of his own. The father, who beholds before him a rising progeny of innocence and beauty, will, without remorse, seduce his neighbour's daughter, which, if retaliated upon himself, might dispatch him to the grave. How often do we find instances of one act of seduction involving and precipitating many an innocent object in ruin and infamy.* The sister ruined leads the brother to the field to avenge her wrongs by the death of his friend, whilst

* The recent conduct of Colonel Fitz—d, stands a glaring proof of these observations.

whilst that friend, necessitated to answer the claims and calls of honor, perhaps imbrues his hand in the blood of the very man whose sister he had seduced. And on the other hand, whilst this father overwhelms the mother and his daughter's ruin, in one fatal crush, he too often (though justly) finds, that the equal decrees of fate, entomb himself and his own fair innocent offspring in the same ultimate abyss of destruction and infamy.

But, nevertheless, if the *seducers* thus feel their just and home deserts, I cannot conceive that domestic persecution should extend to the *seduced*. Nay, I absolutely contradict and condemn this act of thoughtless injustice; for by these very imprudent and unkindred-like measures, do we meet with so many fair and hapless beauties wandering in the thorny paths of prostitution. Brothers and parents should endeavour to heal their sisters and their children's wounds, in lieu of irritating and exposing them; and though the rigid laws of morality,

morality, and the doctrines of chastity may call for condemnation in these unfortunate instances, still I will maintain (let sophism be laid to my charge or not) that the calls of humanity, the claims of kindred affection, nay, that policy itself, actually and unequivocally here demand the balm of solace and protection: and not the blister of prejudice and persecution: And, thinking as I do for myself, I would, either as guardian, brother, or parent, act like honest old *Grey*, in the Chapter of Accidents, and take my poor sacrificed *Cecilia* to my arms, whilst one single spark of virtue and innocence remained behind.

Your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Mrs. C—SSA—S.

AMONG all the characters that I shall have an opportunity of introducing at distinct times into this correspondence, none, perhaps, may interest you more, than the one I am now about to mention.

Though Mrs. C. is not what we denominate a *perfect beauty*, still there is an irresistible something, so engaging and attractive in her features, person, and manner, that strikes you with

with instantaneous admiration and ardour.—She is magnet in minature

“ There’s language in her eye, her cheek and lip,
“ Nay her foot speaks : her wanton spirits look out
“ At every joint and motion of her body.”

Another circumstance that intitles her to your interest is her *misfortunes* (a claim that must always interest your feelings on this, or any other future subject) misfortunes nevertheless which she has endured with uncommon fortitude.

Mrs. C. has, *indeed*, experienced her stormy day; and here, in the common course of remark I must observe, that if she would not precipitate her little bark so often on the cytherean shoals of *extravagance*, she might yet establish a handsome *independeney*. Fain would I recommend this to her most serious consideration. *Beauty*, in her unsettled, dissipated sphere of life, but too soon fades! That beauty departed comes cool, sullen neglect,—farewell,

farewell, after, to every worldly comfort and happiness, if you have not well reaped while the sun smiled—if you have not got in your harvest before the coming of the rainy day.

Mrs. C. has not yet seen more than four-and-twenty years, yet from the period of her first entering into life, no woman, perhaps, has experienced the vicissitudes of fortune more; and, on the other hand, not a woman scarcely, who has profitted so *little* from *that* experience.

Our Heroine's original name, was that of *M—y W—d—e*, but as Mary, and Jenny, and Sukey, and Sally, are common and inelegant names, adopted by christianity for those fair who have once slept in Ida's shade, they are in general metamorphosed to Louisa, Harriet, Juliet, and Sophia, of course *S—a C—s—s* sounds more attractively conspicuous, than *P—y W—d—e*; by the same rule, as Miss
Eliza

Eliza Timbertop does to the coarse Betsey Blackberry.

Mrs. C—'s father was once a Stay-maker in *Holborn*, but misfortunes drove him from thence, to a more humble situation in the *Strand*, and it was at this period that our heroine, from the neglect of her parents, and her association with the sons of the cleaver, in *Hungerford-Market*, first forfeited her virtue.

The *Fashionable Cypriad*, for pride's sake, conceal their original Lovers, if they have been of a low and humble distinction the same as they in general do, the real fathers of those children, who have been lowly and humbly born; the bantlings are then ushered into the world as adopted cousins or nieces,—though the tender feelings and natural anxieties of the mother, soon proclaims the silly subterfuge.

The

The first time that I find Mrs. C. absent from her domestic roof, was, when she exchanged it for lodgings in *South-Molton Street*, and that with a Mr. Ph—ll—ps. This gentleman however, became afterwards so honestly attached to our heroine's person and beauty, that he actually intended to confirm this attachment with the nuptial obligation. But this auspicious intention Mrs. C. improvidently dissipated, after three months cohabitation, by suddenly eloping from her lover, and this three days *only* before the intended marriage; foolishly prostituting herself to *an army pauper—a scarlet beggar* who carried her off with him to *Guernsey*; and after having defeated one of the fairest and clearest prospects of our heroine's life, he shortly after abandoned, and left her on the island, in the greatest distress.

On Mrs. C—s embarrassed situation gaining ground and knowledge, in *Guernsey*, her misfortunes, with her fascinating beauty, (still more enriched and adorned by the charms and tenderness

ness of youth) soon rendered her the merited object of pity. But still in the first instance, her cruel, wayward destiny, gave her over to the offers of one, who in her experienced opinion, could afford her every comfort.— This character was an elderly gentleman of the army, who, most unfortunately, two or three days after his proffered services, was arrested for debt, and of course compelled to seek that friendly relief himself, which he otherwise perhaps, would have generously afforded Mrs. C.

Our beautiful heroine has had, at various times, such a plurality of gallants, that it would not only prove a difficult, but also a tedious undertaking, to pursue her through the many encumbered mazes of intrigue she has been wandering in for these three years-past, an undertaking in fact which would extend beyond the proposed limits of this correspondence.— Suffice it therefore to say, that she was fortunately extricated from her embarrassed situation at *Guernsey*, and that under the protection of the

the person who came forward to assist her there, she soon after found her way safe again to *England*.

Subsequent to this, I next—or near upon the above adventure, find Mrs. C once more quitting the pale-faced cliffs of Britain, with the flattering prospect of amending her fortunes in *France*. In this enterprize she was accompanied (and persuaded to it) by a female native of that Kingdom. But here again she experienced fresh disappointments and distresses, and so exaggerated, in this instance, were her embarrassments in *Paris*, that she was obliged to part with her apparel for common sustenance: and at length, having encountered all the difficulties that result from poverty, indiscretion, and inexperience, she was, by dint of fortitude and resolution, at last enabled to escape from the adverse shores of *Gaul*.

On Mrs. C——'s return to *England*, I find her at least as *conspicuous*, in cohabitation with
Mr.

Mr. *W—ll—hby*, in *Baker-Street*, and whose name, upon the spur of the connexion, she adopted. With this gentleman our heroine might apparently have lived with comfort and credit, but the instability of her temper and fortunes ordered it otherwise; and if I mistake not, it happened during the connexion with Major *C—*, who was then a minor.

With the Major I once more find our heroine in *Guernsey*, but how long she continued there I cannot pretend concisely to ascertain; neither the cause of her *first* separation with this her new lover: But in her next *conspicuous* situation, she dashed away as the mistress of Mr. *Br—nt*, a rich West-Indian; with this gentleman she also resided in *Baker-Street*, (the furniture, &c. here being her own property,) therefore the above connexion with the Major must only have been a transitory one, originating perhaps from the flighty wim of the moment.

Indeed.

THE FASHIONABLE CYPRIAD.

Indeed, I must again take the opportunity of observing here, that to pursue the zig-zag course of this lady's indiscriminate gallantries, would hardly be a subject of possibility; or at least of exact authenticity. Nay, it may be a questionable matter if they could be regularly authenticated by herself, and if they could, it will scarcely be supposed, that I should interrogate her upon that *delicate* point.

Our West-Indian's attachment to Mrs. C— was such that he agreed to allow her £.1400 for her annual expenditure; presenting her, at the same time, with an elegant carriage.— In mentioning this last circumstance, an epigram strikes me, that I have somewhere hit upon, and the point of which may fairly hold with our heroine, whenever she makes a dash, or, rather a *splash*, with new carriages, &c.

“Poll's coach & six! Whither in such haste going?
“But a short journey; to her own undoing!”

This

This connexion, however, with the West-Indian lasted only three months; in which period Mr. B— had advanced our heroine £ 500: The dissolution of this auspicious companionship, arose from a fit of jealousy on the part of the lady, for the Indian's cayenne disposition not suiting with the flavors of a little oyster sauce, that his mistress applied one evening to a tender part of his pericranium, he suddenly took his leave, and from that period ceased all connexion with his inflated mistress.

It may be inferred from hence, that Mrs. C—'s temper inclines to the passionate cast:—Even so it is, but then, like tempers of violent extremes, her choler soon desolves, and dissolving melts into that softness which must as forcibly operate on your feelings, as the waters of Lethe are supposed to have done on the memories of the Heathens. Indeed for my part, I would cheerfully acknowledge the receipt of a whole barrel of oysters upon my pericranium, in Mrs. C—'s short lived moments of passion, if I could afterwards

afterwards command those sweet endearments which are in her power to bestow on the return of tenderness and reason. But in the recent instance of our West Indian, it appears, that he neither gave our heroine time or opportunity to receive any father *impressions* than what his head had already experienced, of course his head must have possessed more *softness* than his *heart*.

After Mrs. C—'s sudden separation from Mr. B—t, she launched out into the most thoughtless extravagance to preserve appearances, which indiscreet conduct and false conception, overwhelmed her at once with innumerable difficulties, debts, and duns, debts that in a very short time amounted to £2000.

To make use here of a very vulgar idiom, there are no distinction of people pay *through the nose* so much and exorbitantly as the *fashionable cypriad*. Their frequent urgencies and continual extravagancies demand and look for credit
the

—the tradesman can, therefore, cheerfully allow the credit, as he always, on these occasions trebles the value of his commodity: Whilst the women, on the other hand, are entirely careless to the charge made, because they indiscreetly and most impolitically conceive, that their gallants must ultimately satisfy them all.

But in the end, when men experience time after time, these incessant calls on their purses, and find their mistresses so negligent of their mutual interest, the most violent attachment must ultimately abate and cease. I cannot, in any instance refer more pointedly on this subject than to our heroine, the effect of this folly she has more than once experienced, most materially so, in relation to a recent circumstance.

There is scarcely, I believe, one vicious leading feature attached to Mrs. C—'s character, but unbounded extravagance. In her diet, she is temperate to an extreme, never tasting strong liquors, and but very moderately indulgent in her wine. Amiable, engaging, and
interesting

interesting in her manners, possessing the most generous feelings and the most benevolent heart, —affable and kind to all about her, when she gives, the endowment is enriched and enhanced with a smile, and such a smile as indicates the sensibility and generosity of the lovely donor; the friend, in short, of all those she conceives worthy and wanting her friendship: yet all this time wanting *herself* a little prudence, economy, and circumspection, acquisitions had she ever been blest with, would have long since rendered her independant both of the world and its opinions.

I hope it will be discerned as my distinguishing principle through this correspondence, to do every justice to a woman's amiable qualities; that the sisterhood who do not possess them altogether, may be stimulated to a laudable imitation in the points where they may be most deficient. At the same time I shall also endeavour to expose folly, where I find her madly conspicuous, that the fair cypriad may view her
own.

own deformity in the mirror I shall hold before her. Profusion and thoughtless extravagance, nine times out of ten, are the ruin of the fashionable cytherians; and as no class of women possess a warmer propensity, or exercise that inclination in so extended a view, for the relief of their distressed fellow creatures, I conceive and feel it as a subject of pity and regret, that they should not always be blest with the means as well as the disposition to continue and enforce the generous emanations and dictates of their benevolent hearts.

Mrs. C. — was next extricated from her pecuniary embarrassments, and once more rendered solvent by Major C. —, who prevailed upon her creditors to come into a composition of ten shillings in the pound. And here I cannot refrain from observing, that if these extortionate and unconcionable creditors had received but the moiety of *that*, their real claims then would have been sufficiently paid. Is it such creditors as these that are the ruin of the Fashionable

Cypriad, these unfortunate women are their chief prey and existence; they first feed upon, —then laugh at them, then dun them, then arrest them, then penetrate them into the horrors of a prison, and when a woman has once been entangled *in a prison*, then farewell afterwards to all principle and propriety, “The paths of a prison lead but to the grave.” In the instance I am now alluding to, it is a two-fold grave, the grave of infamy and corruption.

I do not mean to insinuate that tradesmen in general are open to these philipics, no, but then it has been a particular observation of mine, that one distinct file of tradesmen are concerned in dealing with the cytherian corps and one greedy rogue recommends his brother, as soon and agerly as one poor thoughtless female fool recommends an unfortunate sister.

Another unfortunate crisis of Mrs. C—’s life was the period of her society with ———, when he was with his regiment on the Frontiers.

There

There are various reports concerning this affair, though there is no doubt but that our heroine was an abused woman. When we consider her situation and sex, protection certainly became her due, and whatever indiscretions Mrs. C— might have been guilty of, they certainly did not merit the unmanly treatment she met with in a strange country, and in a foreign camp,— nay,

————— if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,

that could not warrant her being turned out, naked, in the middle of the night, from her inhospitable tent, and exposed, in this helpless situation, both to our own and the austrian soldiery. Her state at this time would have been pitiable indeed, had not the valet of ——— furnished her with a wrapping coat, and otherwise sheltered her from the bitterness of the night.

It is insinuated by some, that the cause of her ill-treatment was the result of her own folly
and

and indiscretion; no indiscretion, however, ought to provoke a blow from a man and a soldier: no folly can palliate a woman's being untented in the middle of the night, and exposed naked, to its damps and inclemencies. Mrs. C— was not the wife of the man, therefore not amenable to his will or authority. If she had acted inconsistently to his judgment, sure there were more proper seasons and methods to exercise his spleen and resentment, than at a time and in a manner so unwarrantably brutal and unfeeling; even a banditti

——“ will not use a woman lawlessly.”

It is said by some, that from Mrs. C—'s unrestrained and indistinct connexion with the officers in camp, that she communicated an infection, which became the cause and pretext for her subsequent ill treatment. To the contrary, however, of this I have heard, that —— carried this distemper with him from England, and that our heroine, on this occasion, undertook the tender office of nurse.

Upon

Upon Mrs. C—'s debts being discharged in *Baker-Street*, she immediately disposed of her equipage and furniture, and, after having encountered the greatest hardships and difficulties, both at home and abroad, I next hear of her being quartered in various lodgings, the last of which was in *Queen-Ann-Street-East*. Here she continued but for a short time, and from thence removed to her present house in *Titchfield-Street*, and which she elegantly furnished through the channel of brokerage.

During the latter part of our heroine's residence in *Baker-Street*, it is well known that she was continually haunted by the Sheriff's officers, vulgarly yclept bailiffs; and an anecdote occurred on one of these occasions that exemplified a ready spirit and proper resentment on her part of the question. Sir Thomas ——— had long been an assiduous, though not a successful dangler in this quarter of the town, and was incessantly tendering his services to Mrs. C—, when, one day, as she was in the custody

of George the Third, by the grace of God, &c. the gentleman's accidental appearance opened a fair opportunity of putting his professions to the proof. Sir Thomas, on this emergent application, immediately manifested a striking instance of his generosity, and most liberally tendered Mrs. C— *a couple of guineas*, to extricate her on this embarrassing occasion. She, however, on experiencing this *proof* of his disinterested friendship, instantly rang the bell for a servant, and ordered her to take a sheet of brown paper and light the fellow out of the house.

It was in lodgings that our heroine originally formed her connexion with a certain clerical gentleman, and which connexion generated a thousand embarrassments. This gentleman's income was slender, and such as it was, it became of course the superior claim of a wife and three children.

When Mrs. C—contrived to furnish the house in *Titchfield-Street*, she gave her warrant
of

of attorney to pay off the sum by monthly installments; But the strong connexion she had formed with the church, soon rendered these stipulated payments impossible, and the consequence of course was, that the broker put in his execution. The execution, however, was soon removed by *Sta—ie*, the attorney;—our heroine had not far to look for a friend, she finds friends every where, but the one the most material, and that is—the friend in and to herself.

Mrs. C—'s connexion with the Divine continued for twelve months, during which period they were considerably indebted to the pawnbrokers for their mutual support. Our heroine, in this large space of love, pledged almost every thing she possessed; nor can there exist a doubt but that her clerical paramour equally distressed himself upon the same occasion.

Our heroine's good and evil stars appear embodied in one sphere, and though the latter for the most part eclipsed the other during her connexion with this gentleman, the good one on a sudden darted an auspicious ray, and illuminated *Peter F——e*, Esq. the banker, on his way to *Titchfield-Street*, the late abode of mutual attachment and distress, and with whom she *now chiefly* continues to live.

At present it is said that Mrs. C— is now as much disgusted with her clerical lover as she was formerly enamoured of him; this *may* be the case, the lady indeed so reports, and I have too much manners to question her word and sincerity on the occasion.

Our heroine's good stars did not stop here, but being assisted by the harlequinade lady—Chance they found means to conjure up His Grace of B——d, and bind him in their spells;—not, however by the magic of a wooden lath, but with the more persuasive charms of a well-

well-nibbed goose-quill. And here I must observe that the appendages of these unfortunate Michaelmas victims ought to be esteemed with as much gratitude and veneration by my present fair subject, as the snowy coated owners of them were once held by the Romans.

The first time that Mrs. C— particularly attracted and fixed the attention of the patriotic *Ru-ss-l*, was at the Opera; but though his Grace strongly eyed our heroine, and she as significantly eyed him, still these reflective glances did not that night effect the impress absolute, or the visit domical; the impression, however, supposed to be made was sufficiently flattering and encouraging on the part of the lady. Mrs. C— is not one of those who

—————never told her love,

But let concealment, like a worm i'the bud

Feed on her damask cheek.

No, no, on the contrary, she immediately wrote to the Duke on the subject, and his Grace was

was at her feet in the short space of two hours. after the receipt of her letter.

There was a very plausible invention that made its appearance last Summer, in an interesting morning paper, under the title of *Haut-Ton*; there were three of them, if I remember right, and every one of them, I am certain, was the fabrication of a facetious wit, who is in the habit of writing for that print. They might have afforded him and his readers some food for curiosity and entertainment, but the ingredients, I believe. were not very palatable to the parties, so conspicuously and romantically brought forward on this occasion.— Nevertheless, it must be confessed, that Mrs. C— is now become fair game for any literary sportsman to bring down, having made herself long since an object of notoriety.

True it is, as before stated, that our heroine's first interview of any consequence with the Duke, was occasioned by an epistolary invitation,

But

But this plan, I understand was jointly concerted and executed by Mrs. C— and another female, whose name (not being a Cypriad) I cannot with propriety and conformable to my plan, introduce into this work.

The aforesaid Divine is brought forward and highly complimented as the author of these *elegant* letters; *bombastic*, however, would have been a more appropriate nomination for them, but the *real author* has styled them *elegant*, therefore I shall not further attempt to interrogate the propriety of *his* appellation.

The point, nevertheless, that implicates him in this business, is highly preposterous and improbable. Is it to be supposed, (just for the sake of a moment's argument,) that this gentleman, who stands conspicuous in the sphere of fashion, though his finances could not correspond with the extravagance of Mrs. C—, would, in the moment of spleen and wantonness, endeavour so forcibly to make himself

himself appear in the world's eye as the palpable pander to her prostitution?—No, hardly possible; but then it will be questioned how these letters obtained access to public view?

Surreptitiously, scarcely credible! The Duke of *B——d* had no knowledge of the affair at least I think his word and honor may be credited on the occasion, for in an interview afterwards with Mrs. *C—* on the subject, his Grace so expressed himself. And lastly, with regard to our *heroine* herself, I think I can safely acquit her of either inclination, means, or capability of introducing this correspondence to the publick attention.

But carry my suppositions a little further, —Is it possible that the Duke was that gudgeon as to be caught by such a monstrosity of bombast?—The letters say that his Grace humoured the joke as he knew Mrs. *C—* could neither write or read.—The humouring, however, of this joke, certainly cost the Duke, from first to last, an infinite deal of time and expence, as he
publicly

publicly supported Mrs. C—as his mistress, for eleven months afterwards, and also gave her the privilege of using his name for whatever she might require; and which indulgence, in the end, was the cause of their separation’ as our heroine exercised it rather too far. Added to this, Mrs. C— can both read and write: she may not write, indeed, like the other women of England, (as Swift observes) from one angle of the paper to the other; and though incapable of making heterogeneous flights of fancy, and extracts from English, French, or Italian authors—she can dictate and express herself in a stile more likely to succeed with a man of the Duke’s sense and discernment, than by adopting, (if it was actually in her power to do so) the hyperboles of the *elegant author* of the *Haut-Ton*.

In another respect, I don’t believe Mrs C— is much of a mythologist; nor do I conceive that she has penetrated yet so high as the celestials. The Duke, as the letters with great
dignity

dignity remark, may be a very godlike man; but our heroine, no doubt, soon found him, like other men, to be only *mortal*.

The consequences, therefore, last summer, at Brighton, stood as thus, and which I shall sum up a little in the fashion of Dr Pangloss—
L. L. D—A—ss.

The writer enjoying his conceit and his laugh—*Impostor Moliere*—Hum!—the smirking misses turning up their little noses, and wondering how so godlike a man as the Duke of B——d could condescend to put up with such a little bit of a drab—*Envy—Spencer*—hum! The ancient tabbies surprising and elegantly expressing themselves, how his Grace could be such a d——d Ass.—The Humors of *Bartholemew Fair*—Hum!—The city prigs swearing, that gad's curse their souls, if it did not all serve the little ***** as she deserved, and that now they were determined not to care a fig about her *smelling of the shov.*—*Prince Hoare*—Hum!—

An

THE FASHIONABLE CYPRIAD.

An officer, becoming *cock* sure that he should now get into *a good thing* for nothing—*Cheap Living*.—*Reynolds*—Hum! Parson *A*—treating the whole with contempt,—*Man of the World*. —*Macklin*—Hum!—and, poor Mrs. C—s, patiently submitting her ivoryed neck to the literary axe—*She Stoops to Conquer*.—*Goldsmith*—Hum!—So ends this *humming* digression

But to continue.—This same letter was the origin of our heroine's established connexion with the Duke. Her features and manners, in the first instance, attracted his attention, and this she still stronger engaged by a well conceived stratagem.

Mrs. C—s was the Duke's mistress for eleven months, and in wick period she expended the sum of £ 3000. Of her manners and person his Grace could never be surfeited.—Her breath is as sweet as the new blown rose. Temperance is rarely to be found among the cyprian sisterhood;

hood, but our heroine is particularly distinguished for the possession of that cardinal virtue. She never applies "hot and rebellious liquors to her blood;" no woman more correctly clean and delicate in all points—possessing at all times an easy and engaging command of conversation—In short, she can altogether render herself an object of inclination, attention, and admiration. But then—fatal blemish! Mrs. C—s's extravagance is unbounded and though there is scarcely a nobleman more generous on his mistresses than his Grace of B—d, still, as I have observed before, incessant applications to a man's purse, must weary in the end(when they extend to a thoughtless profusion. So thus it happened in the present instance; and Mrs. C—s, after a career of eleven months, lost the man by whom she was sincerely beloved, and to whom she was also firmly attached, though on the separation she gained the liberal present of £1000. from the Duke.

Our

Our heroine, during the period she lived with his Grace of B——d, not only extricated herself from all her former embarrassments, (for I must observe, that whilst a single guinea remained in her possession, she would neither keep it back when a claim of right appealed for it, or when an object of distress sued for it) but she also came forward, and in a point, delicate indeed of its complexion, and of which the world may say, was her due so to do; though, in contradiction to that opinion, I will subjoin, it was an obligation she was not altogether enjoined to subscribe to: the absolute necessity, therefore, being laid aside, the more amiable and beautiful will the voluntary good action appear.

During the æra of her last good fortune. and may that good fortune ever continue attached to our heroine, proving, as it has done happily for those whose fortunes have turned upon the adverse axis)—she took and furnished a house in *Somers Town*, for the residence and comforts

comforts of her farther, mother, and sisters : one of whom, *Mary Anne*, she soon afterwards apprenticed to Miss B—s, a respectable milliner in *Hanover Street*, and for whose apprentice fee she generously paid ninety guineas !! Her other sister, *Susan*, has also been placed at a genteel boarding school in *Richmond*.

Mrs. C—s took an elegant house, last summer, in *Kew Lane* *Richmond*, where she gave the most splendid entertainments.—In this respect, excepting Mrs. *Thompson*, she soars beyond the cytherian sisterhood :—with her she stands conspicuous for elegance and extravagance, though not at all behind in either of these points, with her cypriad cotemporary.—But say, *Sophia*, if thy adverse day should chance to lour o'er thy generous soul—if meagre want and sullen neglect should overtake thee ever,—where wilt thou look for this return of beneficence and hospitality ? perhaps, nowhere.—Accident may rob thee of thy beauty—

“The

The rose's age is but a day,
It's bloom—the pledge of its decay;
Sweet in scent, in colour bright,
It blooms at morn, and fades at night."

And fortune, at the same time, weary of granting, and indignant, at having ill-used her frequent bounties, may withdraw her smiles some day for ever.—Then farewell to *Sophia Cussans*, and once more appears in view poor *Mary Wildbore*.

Three of the cardinal virtues I have proved that Mrs. C—s is possessed of, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude; could she but command the first and most essential—*Prudence* as standing the eldest sister of the four, she might then say—

World, I defy thee—Opinion do thy worst!

There

There is one more circumstance (and with which I shall conclude,) that I anxiously recommend to Mrs. C—s's serious consideration I cannot recommend it as a partial friend, as I have not the pleasure of being nominated in any view, as a friend at all ; but I recommend it as an individual, who heartily wishes her well I have been an observer of her actions and career, as far as propriety will allow ; or, of course, I could not have collected the materials of these memoirs. The same, in fact, with regard to her, as to every other *Fashionable Cypriad*.

The subject therefore, that I mean worthy her attention, is, *the pursuit of the Stage* ; for, according to my humble judgment and discrimination, she possesses such qualifications, which, when brought to a little more maturity, will make her an ornament to the profession I recommend.

In

In the first view, Mrs. C—s possesses a fine, clear, distinct, and pathetic intonation.—she has the passions at command, and can communicate them to her audience with much feeling and facility. Her powers at present, cannot reach the nerve of Tragedy ; but still they are nicely and beautifully toned for pathetic and sentimental delivery.—Her person, though *petite*, is at all points and shapes, symmetry itself.—Her carriage and deportment is easy, unaffected, and unembarrassed.—She treads the boards with elegance and dignity—Her action is confident and good. In private, I know her manners to be lively and interesting, and which conveyed on the stage, would render our heroine a fair candidate, either for the smiles of Thalia or the tears of Melpomene: at least, I mean to say, that spirit and sentiment here are well blended, and if Mrs. C—s cannot altogether claim the archness and vivacity of Mrs. *Jordan*, or the deep-toned dignity of Mrs. *Siddons*, still she would not prove an indifferent cotemporary either with the one or the other.

These

These observations result from having seen our heroine perform the character of *Julia*, in the *Surrender of Calais*, and *Ellen de Rosalba* in the *Italian Monk*. Allowing for the apprehensions attending first representations, she appeared to me as possessing in a great measure the style and pathos of Mrs. S. Kemble, whom many judges esteem as one of the first actresses, in whose power it rests to excite the feelings and elevate the passions of the audience.—For my part, I had rather be a spectator of the last act, in the charming Opera of *Inkle and Yarico*, when Mrs. K— performs the latter part, than the last one of all her Sister-in-Law's *Lady Macbeths*, *Isabellas*, or in short, any other character she fills where a tender appeal to the passions is to be made and felt. Mrs. C—, in regard to figure, possesses a most material advantage, for when she appeared in the latter part of the piece, in man's apparel, the symmetry and beauty of her limbs attracted the attention and admiration of the whole audience.

And

And now, to conclude my remarks on Mrs. C—'s theatrical endowments, I would finally recommend her to dedicate as much time as she can possibly spare from her cytherian devotions, to the more distinguished and honorable charms of Thalia and Melpomene.

P. S. I have omitted a few points of information, in some parts of this correspondence, and which I shall fill up by way of postscript.

Mrs. C— has been more than once the silly dupe of French women, against whose subtle arts and insinuations she is not able to stand. A French-woman, in my opinion, is altogether a composition, both corporeally and intellectually so, of intrigue and dissimulation, at least, so our heroine, to her anguish and sorrow, bitterly experienced. For after finding herself robbed and stripped of every thing, in *Paris*, by her gallic companion thither, she soon afterwards also
found

found her way into a French prison, where she continued 'till a remittance from *England* happily relieved her. To mention another instance, she came across, last winter, with a Mrs. S——, another nominally anglicised French-woman, who representing herself to our heroine as a distrest married woman, she generously discharged all her debts, afforded her immediate protection, gave her an asylum at her house in *Kew-lane*, took her to her heart's care, and after having done all this and more, this same French serpent stung her protectress in the tenderest points—disclosing those secrets which gratitude called for concealment, and endeavouring to blacken the character of the very woman whose loaf she was in the daily habit of sharing.

In that part of my letter where I appear doubtfull in regard to Mrs. C—s's connexion with the Major, I have since discovered that she lived twice with that gentleman, and that the Cause of their prior separation sprung from an
accidental

accidental circumstance of his detecting our heroine in the embrace of ——*B—kst—ne*, Esq. A reconciliation, however, took place previous to the Major's departure for the Continent, and on his arrival thither with the regiment, he immediately sent for Mrs. C—. At the period I am now writing of, our heroine lived in *Boulton-Row*, under the name of *Sophia George*, the name which she had also passed by in *South Moulton Street*.

Soon after Mrs. C—s's separation with the Duke of *B——d*, she put down her carriage, but which, and that only very lately, has again appeared in view. His Grace, it seems also, has once more renewed the connexion, but not in so conspicuous a manner as before,—*Peter F——e*, Esq. still continues as the fixed *cher ami* at present, though a dashing intruder lately stepped in, whom it was conjectured would have proved the better of the three. This hero is a Naval Lieutenant and a minor, who being anxious and resolved to anchor his love deep in
the

the bosom of Mrs. C—, gave a bond to settle £ 600. a year on her for life, when he came of age, and that under the penalty of £ 6000, in case of forfeiture, which bond our heroine, very *wisely* accepted on an eightpenny stamp.—Of course Mrs. C—for a few days enjoyed *her* golden dream, whilst her quandum lover enjoyed *his* walking and more substantial pleasures*

To conclude, I am now happy to hear, that our heroine has lately adopted the best and surest means of rendering herself an acquisition to the stage, and also, in a great measure a perfect mistress of the dramatic art.—Mrs. C—has put herself under the instruction of Mr. *J—n P—l—r*, of *Drury Lane Theatre*, and a better actor, or a better master of his profession, treads not the boards of either house.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Mrs. WYNDHAM.

WHO can resist beauty when blended with benevolence,—when adorned with the white robe of charity, and cloathed with the broad mantle of generosity? Happy in this instance has it been for the orphan and widow, that opportunity, in an unguarded moment robbed this fair woman of what the world calls *her honor!*

You have known me express my bitter abhorrence against women ripping and destroying
each

each other's characters, when it is a duty they owe to their own sex,—an actual obligation, in fact, and a necessary step of policy in them, to invigorate their own characters and support their own weakness.—In lieu, however, of concealing each other's indiscretions and imbecillities, they confirm and extend them;—as thus, for example, have I often heard the sex observe of each other,—“ So and so, is a very beautiful girl,—indeed a very sensible girl, and I have had every reason to believe a most charitable girl;—but then, dear me, of what use or avail are all these little amiabilities, when you know she is nothing more than—*a woman of the town.*” So ends the descript plausible,—terminating with this good-natured tag—the purport of which is perhaps already known to the multitude, whilst the connected amiabilities are only known to the few.

——The jewel, best enamell'd,
Will lose its beauty; and though gold bides still
That others touch,—yet often touching will
Wear gold.

Mrs.

Mrs. *W*——'s family must have been of the lowest origin, as in the onset of her life she was a little wanderer about the fields, near the Metropolis, where she collected fuel and other materials for household comforts.* Some time afterwards I hear of her in the neighbourhood of *St. Giles*, and from whence she found her way to a cytherian mansion at the West end of the Town.

What Mrs. *W*——, from her humble sphere of life, must have lost in point of education, she has since acquired by application and a natural inclination to improvement. She has diligently sought the Graces, and happily has found them. The natural disposition, or rather the proper ambition she shews to appear as the finished gentlewoman, has of course ranked her in the first file of *cyprian* fashion;—in short, she possesses all the manners and appearance of the *woman of fashion*, and what is still more valuable, she can claim, and most deservedly so, those qualities which but few of our titled ladies

case

* Some also report that she was a reaper near London.

can pretend to.—In the eye of the world, or, rather in the eye of prejudice (though for that the world and prejudice may be considered as synonymal.)—Virtue, or honor cannot, with strict propriety to their opinions and doctrine, be enrolled amongst Mrs, *W*——'s leading good qualities—but if, for the loss of that one gem, she makes such a truly noble and ample compensation, by succouring the penurious and distressed,—by opening her hand and her doors to the naked and hungry,—and by suffering often for her too exquisite sensibility, she most assuredly possesses the strongest claim to distinction and admiration. The voice of the world may call our heroine a woman of the town, whilst the voice of humanity appels her the woman of feeling.—Prejudice, again, may call her the Child of Prostitution, whilst, on the other hand, Benevolence claims that same child as her own.

Had the divine *Ariosto* ever beheld the counterpart of *Charlotte Wyndham*, he never could
have

have been so lavish in his praise of golden locks ; flaxen tresses in lieu might have adorned the snowy shoulders of his fair *Angelica*.—Her teeth also are “ *white as the snow of Arden*,” and her features “ *blooming as the bow of the shower*.”

Mrs. *W*——’s gallantries, as you may conjecture from this brief description of her personal charms and private amiabilities, have been numerous, so much so in fact as not to allow a regular pursuit of them. Her train has swept the cytherian steps of *Mesdames Johnstone* and *Weston* ;—their joint mansions were our heroine’s habitation for some years,—of course she became the subject of indiscriminate gallantries. From the Hon. *C*—— *W*——*m* she took and continues her present name,—Lord *St*——*ll* had once the fashionable reputation of styling *Charlotte W*—— his mistress, and there is no doubt but that his lordship, at one time, was much attached to her ; Captain *K*——*t*, however, being once accidentally dis-

covered in the clandestine embrace, Lord S——ll ceased the connexion. How long this last warm love continued, I know not, but I next find our heroine—at least conspicuously connected—as the *chère amie* of ——— D——ll, Esq. and now the fair companion of ——— Os——ne, Esq. M. P. with whom she continues to live, in *Sloane-Street*.

Mrs. W——, independent of supporting family connexions, has always proved the generous friend and protectress of her distressed sisterhood. Her benevolent heart has extended its susceptible emanations to objects of various distinctions, and in short she has displayed herself, at all times and on all occasions, the child of feeling and of humanity.

The deceased Mrs. Gale, whose memory must be still fresh and strong among the gay world, is, or was, a fair subject to adduce as a leading instance of our heroine's disinterested generosity. This lady (who was th daughter
of

of Colonel *R—d*, and afterwards married to Captain *B—e*, and afterwards married to *G—e*, and from whom she afterwards took her name) was obliged to seek shelter, some years ago, in *France*, to escape the vigilance of her creditors. Upon Mrs. *G—*'s return to *England*, her arrival, though diligently kept secret, soon found its way to the knowledge of *Charlotte W—*, who immediately commenced and obtained a subscription for her unfortunate friend, to the amount of 140*l*. Added to this, I shall just relate another existing anecdote of our heroine's liberality, and which briefly is—that she allows 20*l*. a year towards the education of Mrs. *H—l—e*'s children, an actress belonging to *Colman's* little Theatre, and whose comic abilities are sufficiently known to the public.

Is not this well?—Then sleep soundly, *Charlotte*, hug thy pillow with an honest confidence,—the world may sprinkle it with the dewy tear, forced by the poisonous essence of

slander, envy, and prejudice,—a reflective conscience still will be thy bosom friend. Heed not, therefore, the tribunal of disappointed prudery,—look only to the tribunal of futurity, and the Almighty attribute of Mercy will as cheerfully welcome the tender *child of charity*, as the *spotless daughter of chastity*.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Mrs. HARTWELL.

EXTREMES, at all times and in all points, when occurring in this correspondence, must look for reproof. Mrs. C——s has been properly tasked for thoughtless extravagancies; therefore, on the other hand, it is not to be supposed that its contrary position—meanness,—should escape due correction also:—But more of this anon.

Mrs. C— is the wife of one *H—zle—d*, from whom she deserted for many *striking*

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reasons.

reasons, after a cohabitation of four years. The gentleman she first lived with after this necessitated elopement, was ——— O—w—y, Esq. who supported our heroine in a genteel style, but who, after a cohabitation also of eight months, was obliged reluctantly to leave her, through the menaces of her husband, who, having discovered their retreat, threatened to bring an action against his wife's paramour.

Mrs. H—— on this removed to *Titchfield-Street*, where she lay in of her second child, by H—zle—d, and during which period she was entirely supported by Mr. O—w—y, though he had at the time given up all idea of ever renewing the connexion.

Upon our heroine's recovery, she next became acquainted with Major H——s, and then with the Duke of C——e, who took a ready furnished house for her, in *St. James's-Place*, presenting her at the same time with linen to the amount of 200l. and a carriage with correspondent

pendent equipage, &c.—This connexion, however, lasted only five months, in which period his Grace had given *Hookham*, in *Bond-Street*, an order to provide his mistress with an elegant library, but which order was countermanded on some strong suspicions of infidelity being entertained on his part, against our heroine, and in which period, also, the Duke was sued by the husband for an illicit cohabitation with his wife. But his Grace not chusing to have his name brought forward in such an affair, compromised the matter with him for the sum of £200.

The slender cause which gave birth to this fit of jealousy on the part of the Duke, briefly stood as thus:—Mrs. *H*——, in one of her frolics, some few years since at *Ascot-heath* Races, thought proper to migrate from her coach and four, to the phaeton of a dashing young Officer. — During their chariotéeing round the course, they were unfortunately encountered by the Duke, who, in the momentary heat of impatient jealousy, instantly set off to

Town, and going to our heroine's house, in *St. James's-Place*, his Grace, from some clandestine motive, or inflated pique, told the servants, that their mistress would not be home that night. Mrs. *H——*, however, soon after arrived, and immediately sent to the Duke, entreating an interview to explain, but which solicitation was refused. His Grace, nevertheless, embassied Captain *W——ds* to learn what amount would discharge her debts contracted during his cohabitation?—Our unfortunate heroine nominated but a very scanty sum, which was accordingly forwarded by the same channel, with a *generous* permission for her to continue in *St. James's-Place*, 'till she could conveniently accommodate herself with another lodging, and

Thus ends this strange eventful history.

The officer above alluded to, who had been the innocent cause of Mrs. *H——*'s forfeiting the *high* esteem of her noble paramour, immediately offered our heroine his protection;—
this

this offer was of course accepted, but the connexion existed no considerable length of time, as the hero soon experienced that his new mistress was not altogether celebrated for her strict adherence to constancy.

After this connexion—commenced by chance, and probably terminated by causes of a similar tendency, I next find Mrs. *H*—— with her former friend, Major *H*——s, and surely never could a pair be found of more congenial tempers, habits, and inclinations.

In the onset of this correspondence I have dwelt upon the word *meanness*.—I meant at first only to apply it in a single instance,—but now I think I may, with every propriety, be extended to a double view;—at least it will soon be discovered how far facts can substantiate these insinuations.

The Major and Mrs. *H*——, a few summers since, cohabited together, at *Margate*, in a

house upon the *Fort*, but his duty frequently summoned him to Town,—this necessary absence of course afforded a necessary, or rather a *necessitous* opportunity for our heroine to gal-
lant it with most of the officers stationed on the spot,—at least with those who were *occasionally* visitors at the house on the *Fort*; and as the Major's allowance was the large sum of *Ten Shillings and Sixpence per Week*, to support Mrs. *H*——, a child, and a servant!—there needs no ghost from the grave to inform us, that the lady could not conveniently or prudently be more *retrograde* in accepting pecuniary favors, than she was in participating others.

As the Major, in the course of the succeeding summer, had an invitation to spend it in *Scotland*, he gave our heroine a mental passport to go where she thought proper. Having a sister engaged that season at the *Weymouth Theatre*, she made choice of that place for her summer residence. Here I find Mrs. *H*—— violently in love with a Captain *S—ms*, of the
Bucks

Bucks Militia, (still preserving a due reverence and predilection for the cloth, no doubt in compliment and consideration of the Major,) with whom she resided the whole time she was at *Weymouth*;—though I cannot altogether pretend to compliment this son of scarlet with the entire possession of his mistress, as it is well known, among the kindred epaulets, that there were several others among them who occasionally shared her caresses.

From *Weymouth* Mrs. H—— returned to Town.—The Major supposing—(Heaven help the man, or rather Heaven help the woman, if she had not been helped to any thing more than what her paramour had *helped* her with) that she had been a perfect emblem of constancy, still looked upon himself in some measure bound to continue his *allowance*; he therefore took lodgings for her in the *Edgeware-Road*, and where she privately received the visits of Captain S—. Here, however, from some secret motives, the Major informed his mistress, that

that it was not convenient for him to live with her any longer *publickly*, and therefore recommended unfurnished lodgings:—liberally proposing at the same time, to introduce a few comfortable things—upon these high considerations also, that she must live upon *twelve shillings* per week, and there pass for a widow lady!!—Oh! where then, *H——*, were thy weeds?—Some willow must have shaded them beneath the brook of despondency.—Thy mind, however, o’ertopped the willow, and clouded all—in the thick mist of—*meanness*.

Major *H——s* now passed our heroine as a widow lady, in *John-Street, Fitzroy-Square*, and himself as her Trustee, (in order to enjoy the plausible opportunity of continuing his visits) for the space of nine months—and so run on all this period, without even the allowance, or assistance of—a servant.

For this contemptible protection, Mrs. *H——* submitted to the ill-nature and caprice of a man
she

she long had ceased to love ; and possessing similar mean and narrow principles, she obtained that which she had long and deservedly merited—the contempt and neglect of all the fashionable and gay young men about Town.

At length, however, by the advice of a friend, she was prevailed upon to part with the major who, upon their separation re-delivered about £20. out of £200. which she had deposited with him on the commencement of their connexion—the remainder of which she had drawn from him at different times, to compensate for the scanty allowance he had all along settled upon her.—Call ye this living with a man?—Appel it, rather, starving with a man.—Had'st thou lodged, *H*——, with the very old hags as described by *Beamont* and *Fletcher*, thou could'st not *well* have fared *worse*.—Indeed I cannot blame thy paramour so much for his mean offerings, as thee, for thy mean acceptance of them.

It was not long time, after our heroine's separation from Major H——s, before she chanced upon Major A—b—r, with whom she now lives in *Artington-street*.—And, here suffer me delicately to observe, that whether it is from a natural propensity incapable of being shaken by the principles of liberality, and a due regard to the decency of a proper and a sufficient pride, or, that Mrs. H——— is unfortunate in meeting with men who preclude her from exemplifying a single spark of generosity—I know not—at least so far, that I cannot take upon myself *minutely* to ascertain—but still so far can I authenticate, that I now actually find her, as a mere servile Fashionable Cypriad—(for fashionable she certainly stands, or no introduction of Mrs. H——— would be brought forward in this correspondence)—cantering after the servants in the kitchen, with a large bunch of keys attached to her apron, (like Miss *Hardcastle* in her menial capacity) to see they do not give away the broken victuals—(id est, if they have any to give)—in short, and to conclude, with
our

our heroine, she must entertain a very humble opinion of those attractions which *personally* she possesses to an eminent degree, or she would never submit to be little better than an upper servant, who sees the dinner well cooked and served up,—then slips on a clean apron and heads her master's table;—and next by way of reward for her culinary abilities, she comes in for a treat now and then to the Opera, or to see a new representation at either of the Theatres.

P. S. I have forgot to observe, that whilst Mrs. H——— lived with the Major, a gentleman of the name of *G—ld*, an Hibernian, with whom she intrigued, always expressed a wish to stand her friend; but on application to him, after she had left *H———s*, these promises were found to stand only upon the same uncertain shallow ground as the Park and £. 500 a year.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Mrs. GIBBS.

THIS lady's family name is *Logan*, and she ranks as the third daughter of a very honest tradesman in *Monmouth-street*.—The first time I find her in a public situation was at the little Theatre, in the *Hay-Market*, in the character of *Biddy*, in the farce of *Miss in her Teens*, under the fictitious name of *Miss Palmer*, and in which character she acquitted herself with great respectability.

When

When Mr. J—n P—l—er became manager of the *Royalty Theatre*, he engaged our heroine, and also put Mrs. Logan, her mother, into the house, as fruit-woman ;—before the opening of which, however, Mrs. Gibbs unavoidably came across Mr. William P—l—r, with whom she first intrigued, and which connection made her—a mother, From this quarter she passed over to the protection of Mr. G—, from whom she assumes her present name, and with whom she cohabited 'till that gentleman went abroad. On our fair heroine's separation from Mr. G—, she became the *chere amie* of Captain C—le, who was then stationed with his company in the *Tower-Hamlets*, with whom she continued during the reign of the *Royalty-Theatre*, under the management of Mr. J—P—, and to this gentleman she certainly stands peculiarly indebted for the prominent situation she now so deservedly holds in the theatrical department.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gibbs confessedly possesses a considerable portion of dramatic endowments, which, nevertheless, require much attention, and more practice, than she at present experiences, to attain maturity and perfection.—Her performance of *Louisa*, in the *Deserter of Naples*, at the *Royalty*, was a master-piece (if I may be allowed the expression,) of excellence in its kind. Her forte is rural simplicity, and in which line she bids fair to surpass all her cotemporaries. She has now passed into the hands of a choice master, who always has it at his command to blend the judgment and discernment of the critic with the excellence of the dramatist.

After Captain C——, I next find our heroine under the wing and protection of B—ds—w, Esq. with whom she lived about two years, and to him succeeded her present companion, George C—lm—n, the younger.—The world, since that period, is tolerably well acquainted with the career of Mrs. Gibbs, at least, they easily might be so, if the public prints are to be estimated

mated as the active conveyances of both her public and private conduct.

I shall take this occasion of observing, that there are no class of people, whose little follies and extravagancies, are so particularly dwelt upon, as those of actors—married or unmarried.—Their public capacities lay them open to the literary lash, and, which is next followed up, with censorious animadversions on their private characters. In this latter instance they cannot defend themselves with that confidence and propriety, as can another less conspicuous individual.—And now, for candour sake, let me enquire, why and wherefore their private conduct should be blended with their professional capacity? Those, who thus attempt to wound them in this light, do not reflect at the moment, that their families and friends deeply participate in the pangs of these inflicted wounds. They have their eyes and means, to see and read, as well as others; and when the husband or father returns home, from the arduous

duous labours of his profession, he soon finds that his wife and family have seen one of the morning prints.—His domestic loaf is immediately soured by severe reproaches; and that very home, which he regards as his resting-place, is made the echo of his intrigues and his extravagancies.—I do not stand the advocate of these gallantries; but I must observe, that among men of sense, these private matters should not be admitted into the vehicles of information, when a moment's reflection must suggest, that they answer no solid purpose, though they occasion a thousand inquietudes and anxieties.

There are married men on the stage, who are the best of husbands and of fathers; still their situations render them the wishful objects of intrigue.—Why then should these intrigues be conveyed to a fond wife—an amiable daughter? It is only throwing them the poignard of jealousy and dissaffection.—A man of sensibility cannot endure the continual reproaches of a wife, whom

whom he is sincerely attached to; and a wife, whom he is also conscious of wounding in the tenderest part—

“He that is robb’d, not wanting what is stolen,

“Let him not know’t, and he’s not robb’d at all.”

So let this observation stand good in the present instance; for shew me the man,—standing conspicuous as an actor does—eminent in his profession—engaging in his person—and interesting in the moments of conviviality—bring that man forward, and say to me, that he can, at all times, and upon all occasions, withstand and reject the importunities and allurements, thrown out against him, by a beautiful woman,—and then I should account him, a wonderful phænomenon indeed!

As these remarks have commenced with Mr. P—— and Mrs. Gibbs, I shall conclude by observing, (for their connexion has been too.

too long known to occasion further domestic inquietude)—that *he* possesses too much the character of a gentleman,—a man of honour and of sensibility, to suffer any illicit amour to betray him into that want of respect, *where respect is so deservedly due.*

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Mrs. E. CAREY.

THIS lady is also of the *Logan* family, and next sister to *Mrs. Gibbs*. And here, indeed, I must observe, that if this family's nativity had been submitted to the wise prognostications of *Mrs. Williams* or *Mr. Coombe*, they certainly must have made *Venus* the planet under whose influence they were born; at least, so they most unequivocally would, had they known so much of them twelve years ago as they could do now.

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In

In the year 1788, I first find the beautiful Miss *Logan*, under the protection of Captain *B—rt—on*, of the *Horse-Guards*, and with whom she continued till the year 1790.—This dashing connexion occasioned some pleasantries upon the fortitude and courage of Mrs. *Carey*. Whether she felt, or how she relished, the blunt point of these observations, I know not; but she evidently never appeared inclined to complain of her paramour.—The third letter, however, of the alphabet, repeated thrice, it seems, was as applicable on this occasion, and as fitly appropriated to our heroine, as it was once to the Countess of *Ch—dl—y*.

After Mrs. *Carey*'s separation from Captain *B—*, her intrigues were blended and indiscriminately carried on for three years, till at length she met with the then Hon: *Charles John C—y*, now Lord *F—lk—d*, and between whom a mutual attachment soon and steadily took place—an attachment, indeed, so steady on
the

the part of our heroine, that it accompanied her lover to the *King's-Bench*, where she continued with him, during his long confinement.—From this gentleman, Mrs. *Carey* passed on to *O—n S—th*, Esq. and with whom she now resides at *Condober Park*.

LETTER

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LETTER VII.

Mrs. BAYNTON.

I IN the course of this correspondence, I have experienced the most pleasing sensations, and felt a kind of superior nerve leading on my pen, whenever I have had the pleasing satisfaction of recounting and dwelling on such circumstances, as redound to the credit and character of this fair, (and as the world adds) unfortunate part of the creation.—And indeed, particularly so, when the individual in question has not the disrepute to be ranked on the crooked file of envy and jealousy—a jealousy that
must

must of course create a copious flow of prejudice, and render the marked object of it a subject, too often, of dislike and evasion among the other sex. This allusion consequently falls to Mrs. *Baynton*, of whom justice and candour demand, that we should speak in somewhat of the strongest strain; though, in so doing, truth suffers not the smallest violation.

This lady's father was a respectable merchant in the city, and his fair daughter, our heroine, abandoned her paternal roof at *the tender age of fourteen*, with B——n, Esq. from whom she took, and still continues her name. On this affair I shall add no comment, as the reader may easily suggest what I might with propriety *have intimated*.

With Mr. B——— this lady continued for about two years, when I next find her with Mr. B—gg—n, of the law; and from which gentleman the beautiful Mrs. B—gg—n takes her name. With him our present heroine

cohabited for about fifteen months, and, upon quitting her second paramour, she launched deeply in the vortex of a general and indiscriminate gallantry.

Mrs. *Baynton* was now in fact, lost for a time to herself and the world, though all the world at the same time were continually coming across her; or, otherwise speaking, she was so lost *herself*, that all the world knew where to find her.—Mrs. *H—rr—ton*, a woman of some style in those days, also met with Mrs. *Baynton*, and, by forming a friendship and companionship with her, she soon found means, by her person, youth, and engaging lively manners, to establish herself in an equal degree of style with her friend—and the first step our heroine made up the ladder of independency, (an independency that is likely to continue for life) was her introduction and subsequent connexion with the late *R— M—ck—n*, Esq. of the Guards, with whom she cohabited for three years.

From

From this period there has been a species of prudence, or policy, (for policy I believe it will be called in the instance of Mrs. *Sumner* and others; and as the present policy bears some analogy, though by no means so close a one, when speaking of Mrs. *Baynton*) attached to the character of our heroine; for, when she parted with Captain *M*——, she also parted with her furniture, &c. carefully depositing the returns, as a provision for a future day, and submitting very patiently to chance, for a new lover, to supply the losses attending brokerage, commission, &c. and to find a fresh supply of goods, to encrease her future capital.—She however wisely preserved her plate, judging, by what the Jews swear, that plate is almost as good as money.

The more plausibly to carry on this well-judged plan, Mrs. *Baynton* took ready-furnished lodgings; and whither she originally met with Mr. *M*——, the banker, in them, or during her intimacy with Captain *M*——, I cannot

directly ascertain, but I find him as her next substantial friend, and with whom she lived several years—I think seven, though I can call to remembrance, that she was absent some time from the gay world, and in that interim, it is probable, she was living with Mr. P—y—ne, the banker, at one of his country seats.

I shall now come to my allusion, in the commencement of this letter, and the circumstances of which must pourtray Mrs. *Baynton* in the most amiable light—afford a most shining trait in her character—give it a lasting and impressive lustre—convince the world that self-interest was easily forgot and superseded, when gratitude and affection interfered—that the sinking pinnacle did not go down, without her affording a protecting and consolatory hand.—In short, it altogether forms that combination of honour and disinterestedness, which must ever illumine her features; though prejudice and certain situations of life, may sometimes necessitously force a blushing tint upon them.

During

During Mr. M——'s connexion with our heroine he presented her with a settlement of £200. a year for life; but it is well known, that not a very long time back this gentleman, and the whole concern became insolvent,—and this at a period when Mrs. *Baynton* stood responsible for £1200. arising from their joint domestic expences. When this unexpected and fatal shock reached her knowledge, she voluntarily and generously resigned her settlement again to Mr. M——. Added to this, she immediately called a meeting of her creditors, and made a general offer to yield up all her furniture, linen, plate, carriage, &c. 'till fortune put on a more favorable aspect,—reserving, however, to herself the principal and interest of £1200. which she had vested in the funds;—a sum (as she frankly told her creditors on the occasion) she had laid by to combat the miseries of a future day, and to supply the wants of declining years.—A sum, indeed, she now regarded as indispensibly necessary, lest a prison, which then stared her in the face,

might be the ultimate consequence of Mr. M——'s insolvency.—But happily and wisely judged for all parties, her creditors would not be outdone in candour and generosity, and so far from accepting a single shilling at the time, they unanimously assented to give their honest and fair bankrupt, what time she thought proper *herself*, to satisfy the claims they had upon her.

I feel myself happy in relating this circumstance, a circumstance I know to be well founded in fact, and which reflects the highest credit on the principles and character of the fair subject to whom it so truly alludes.

This united act of honor, honesty, candor, and disinterestedness, did not long go unrewarded, for not long after the above circumstance, Mrs. Baynton met with Mr. Cl—y, who not only discharged all her debts, but furnished and settled her in an elegant house in *Thornhaugh-Street*, where she still continues to reside,—not only independently happy and
There

comfortable herself, but making those also, whose wants and ill-fortunes give them a just claim to the calls and assistance of her purse and protection.

Though Mrs. *Baynton*, for the greater part of her life, has been under the protection of some gentleman, still it is very generally known that her gallantries have not been confined to any particular individual.—Her nature, person, and temper appear physically formed for intrigue;—still she will never be actuated or governed by selfish and pecuniary considerations. Mrs. *Baynton* in fact is a female *bonne vivante*—she likes to see her table surrounded with jolly friends, and covered with fine venison and choice burgundy. She loves her bottle and her song (as well as the first woman of fashion in the kingdom), and for these indulgencies she frequently gets some dry rubs from her envious sisterhood, who are apt, on such occasions, to convert this same indulgence, into temperance.

There is a common, though not a very elegant observation, among the daughters of Cytherea, so far as relates to the above circumstances, which is—"Well, pray, and what then?—The dinner may have been excellent, and the wines super-excellent,—but, tell me, did she pay for them herself?" This is a notable hit, and goes down with all the smoothness of a jelly. I believe, in the instance just recited, that I can affirm, neither male or female friends, on such convivial occasions, ever contributed towards the enjoyment of Mrs. Baynton's table, but by their good company and humour;—and I also maintain, that there is no woman more liberal,—not only in this, but in every other point; and no woman who possesses a greater warmth of heart,—a more open mind,—or a greater flow of spirits to contribute towards the cheerfulness of her friends.—Spirits at the same time happily organized to laugh at the world, and disregard the voice of ill-nature and prejudice.

Among

Among our heroine's favorites we have at times distinguished both sons of the *sock* and *buskin*.—She has had her sentimental heroes,—her tragic heroes,—and her vocal heroes.—Mr. *John P*——, of *Drury-Lane Theatre*. was long her distinguished favorite:—To him have succeeded that sable hero *J. P. K*——, Esq. and the crazy *M-dd—n*. Among the vocal gentlemen have been *K-ll-y* and *J—ns—e*, the latter of whom formerly deserted his departed and beautiful little *chere amie*, *Sally Wilson*, who long trod the boards of *Covent-Garden* with éclat and success, for the more substantial charms of our heroine.

By these habits of intimacy with the heroes of the Drama, Mrs. *Baynton* imbibed a taste herself for the stage; and though her figure is too much *en bon point*, she possesses such requisites, in point of delivery and conception, as would have rendered her no mean candidate for public favor.

She

She once took a mad trip over to *Dublin*, where she was to have performed *Stella*, in *Robin Hood*, but feeling herself offended, during the rehearsal, by that dramatic Slawkenbergius, *B-wd-n*, she returned to *London*, with as much rapidity and thoughtlessness as she had quitted it.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Mrs. SCOTT.

THE onset of this lady's life can claim no distinction whatever,—it commenced in servitude, and so proceeded for some years, 'till we find her in one of the subaltern Cytherian mansions; from this scene of indiscriminate gallantry, she was taken by *Charles T—y—r*, Esq. who furnished her a house in *Charlotte-Street, -Portland-Place*; here she accidentally met with an elderly gentleman, *Mr. K—n—thy*, a West-Indian, with whom she cohabited about two years,—in fact, as long as his fortune

fortune could well stand it; which being at length so crippled by the extravagance (as he conceived) of his mistress, he was obliged to leave her.

In this more early period our heroine passed by the name of *Mrs. Godfrey*, and it was when she resided in *Charlotte-Street*, that she received a wound from that assassin, *Rhynwick Williams*, and against whom, together with the *Miss Porters*, she formed a principal evidence on that scoundrel's trial.

After *Mr. K——*'s necessitated separation from *Mrs. Godfrey*, I find her with *Harry S——*. For this gentleman she changed her name to *Scott*, which name she still continues; by him also she has had a child.

With *Mr. S——* our heroine constantly lived two years, after which her gallantries became, and still continue indiscriminate and general. Lord *M——n*, however, after the
loss

loss of his wife, substituted this lady's caresses for his lost conjugal embraces.

Mrs. Scott lived part of the last summer at Ramsgate, with Lord R—cl—e, but going from thence to Brighton, she renewed her acquaintance with Mr. S—, whose regiment was then stationed there.

The memoirs of Mrs. Scott, for a woman who walks in the first file of Cytherian fashion, is among the uninteresting ones that we are obliged to take notice of, and for this only reason, because—she is a *fashionable Cypriad*.

Our heroine, indeed, has rendered these memoirs uninteresting herself; and though one of the most elegant and beautiful women stationed in this sphere of life, still she mutilates all her charming acquisitions by displaying a manner the most affected, and by suffering herself to be governed by a spirit mean to an excess.—Affectation and meanness are not uncommon ingredients

ingredients to be found,—here they predominate with full sway:—She stints herself in her meals, and when asked the cause, she accounts for it by an apprehension of growing—*too fat*;—she makes her mantua-makers cut out her gowns before her, for fear they should—*crib*. Sensibility she cannot possess,—those men, therefore, who have been lulled into the fond fancy of possessing her heart as well as her person, have generally found themselves in the end egregiously deceived:—After she has acquired a new sideboard of plate, and other valuable articles of luxury, she grows *fatigue*,—this assumed ennui is soon seen through, and thus she proceeds from chapter to chapter.

Mr. —, with whom our heroine had cohabited for two years, and on whom her every thought and existence appeared to depend, did not even escape this cruel neglect;—nay, he experienced still worse treatment, for when he had exhausted his last shilling on this *penurious woman*, she actually suffered him to be arrested in

in bed, for the butcher's bill, when it is well known she held at the time a considerable sum of money in the *Bank of England*.

Mrs. *Scott*, however, is not without one amiable feature,—and one that reflects a beam of merit and distinction on her character, and that is, she supports a mother and sister;—could she, therefore, cast off those darkling inmates of her heart—covetousness and meanness,—she would soon rise to the meridian of Cytherian lustre.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Mrs. THOMSON.

THE exact memoirs of a fashionable Cypriad are almost as difficult to obtain as the secrets of a prime minister.—Springing from a low and humble source, they endeavour to keep these secrets as long as they can at the bottom of the well; but the bucket being sent frequently down, in quest of the truth, it rises up by perseverance, though sometimes a little tinged with a few sprinklings of obscurity.

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There are various reports concerning this lady's origin and progress into life. The fashionable Cypriad, themselves, are the oracles often of each other's lives:—When half a dozen of them, after a party dinner, get warm with the Tuscan grape, then the histories begin, and you hear in a short time various curious anecdotes of the different sisterhood, though attended with so many contradictions that it is hardly possible to collect a perfect insight to them; what, therefore, may have been traced from this channel will be partly reported of my present fair subject, though corrected by my own opinion.

Mrs. *Thompson* was born in the north of *England*, and there is no doubt, I think, of her having been a *reaper*; for some summers ago, when she was down at *Margate*, she laid a wager she would reap a sheaf of wheat as well as the best of the reapers there, which she performed, binding it equally well.—On this occasion she gave a guinea among the husbandmen.

This

This circumstance gives you immediately a favorable opinion of our heroine;—it is a proof of her possessing a good share of sense and also a good heart.

In the humble capacity of a reaper, it is said, she first met with Lord *W—ch—sea*, who saw her in the reaping field; and being struck with her manner and figure, his lordship persuaded her to leave that humble station, for her present elevated one in *Berkley-street, Portman-square*.

Having stated my own account, I shall proceed with those I have acquired elsewhere, though with regard to Mrs. *Thompson* having been a reaper I cannot entertain a doubt.

Our heroine's family being in very confined circumstances, she was forwarded to the Metropolis, where, as country people foolishly imagine, "*a smart wench is sure to make her fortune.*"—This lady, however, in one instance at least, is an exception to this supposed folly,
for

for her fortune and independency may be regarded as already established.

In *London* Mrs. *Thompson* is first found in the house of a milliner and mantua-maker, in which situation she was seduced by a Mr. *T——n*, from whom she takes her name, who afterwards left her in the greatest distress.

From this period she roved unrestrained through innumerable fields of fortuitous gallantry, 'till she got into the mansion of Mrs. *Adams*, in *King's-place*, where she most fortunately met with the pity and protection of Earl *W—ch—sea*; who from that period took her under his friendly wing, and has continued it till this very day,—forming a period of no less than nine years.

Whether this last statement is the real fact or not I cannot pretend to ascertain :—But it is probable that Mrs. *Thompson's* being a woman of gallantry, she must have acquired some more
knowledge

knowledge of the world and its manners than she could have gained in the reaping field.—It is equally probable also, that his lordship might meet with her in a brothel, as well as in crossing a field, for those infamous houses are oftener looked into by men of the first distinction than matters of far superior consequence ;—and here I must remark, that if magistrates also were to look into them, and enforce the powers they are invested with, in the same laudable manner as they have done in regard to the fashionable gaming houses, they would likewise preserve many a gay thoughtless young man from disease and ruin.

• Lord W——— has settled 400l. a year on Mrs. Thompson, for life, and allows a thousand a year for her present establishment.—This connexion has produced two beautiful children.

The ill-natured *Cypriad* have diligently reported, that who the father of the eldest is remains

remains a doubt, and that K—x, of the Guards stands the cause of this report. For this they assert many plausible reasons, particularly the resemblance of the child to the latter gentleman:—this, however, is a most cruel and malevolent^t assertion, nor should I have introduced it but the rumour being so much in circulation:—added to this, my original plan might have received some interruption, as it was formed to state facts with the strictest impartiality.

Lord W——, on the birth of this child, most liberally put by £5000. in the funds, for its future provision. This child is a fine girl, about eight years old, and will owe much to the kindness and generosity of its father; the other is a boy, and the exact resemblance of the Earl.

It but seldom happens that a woman possesses the generosity and gratitude to love and esteem the man by whom she is supported;—there is a characteristic capriciousness leagued

to a Cypriad, which militates against that stylish class of lovers—among themselves ineligantly called *their keepers*. Let the man be ever so liberal with his purse,—attractive in his person, and think of keeping his woman,—he is mostly sure of being deceived ;—for the fact is, a woman rarely can love the man who pays, or rather who *keeps* her. There is such an unaccountable antipathy that hangs about the fair daughters of Chytheria, in these instances, that they fly with eagerness and pleasure from the golden embrace, though it be still further enriched with the most conspicuous beauties that adorn a noble mind and a person, to the more congenial caress of some necessitous favourite.

Whatever gallantries Mrs. Thompson may have, they derive their circulation from the sisterly Cyprian conventions,—further than what I have collected from the records of that fair court I shall not pretend to avouch for their authenticity.—Many of these records, however, may have their flaws,—may have been worded

in

in envy by one sex, and enlarged by vanity on the other.—The women may look with a jealous eye upon her superior conquests, and therefore exaggerate her minor ones.—The men also may too often boast of those intrigues which they have enjoyed only in fancy ;—men, it is well known, whose strength and appetite are exhausted, often have recourse to these little inventions, and once holding a fair appearance in the field of gallantry, (their constitution at the same time being only known to themselves), acquire more credit and circulation than they are warranted to do.

Mrs. *Thompson*, though gifted with prudence and œconomy, as well as good fortune, nevertheless lives in a style of splendor adequate to her establishment.—She gives elegant entertainments, and that in a *fashion* which responds with every idea of *splendor*:—Her motto seems to be *Dum vivimus, vivamus*.—Some of her sisterhood call this ostentation ; now I conceive it to be a proper adequate pride,—a pride which

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should

should be always maintained, and which gives the possessor of it a degree of respectability and consequence, that the tongue of envy and malice may attempt to cripple, but in vain. As for my part, I would rather put up with the fare of a chop-house, than sit down to the entertainments of Mrs. *Finch* or Mrs. *Scott*, where, to follow *Martial*.

“ A silver service loads the board,

“ Of eatables, a slender hoard ;

“ Your pride and not your victuals spare,

“ I come to dine, and not to stare.”

The only relation left, I believe, of our heroine's, is a mother, who is amply supported, at a little distance, by the daughter,—another maxim of prudence that should be recommended to the majority of the Cyprian sisterhood, who maintain their parents under their own roofs, and of course render them, in the moments of inadvertency—if not the spectators, at least the sure suspects of their gallantries,

To

To sum up Mrs. *Thompson's* character, I shall conclude with observing, that whether she does or does not carry on these reported intrigues, she, on the contrary hand, is possessed of every other temperance.—She tastes not the Bacchanalian stream like the Cytherian one,—in short, she amply retributes for one venial fault, in being the possessor of a natural good heart,—a benevolent disposition,—and ever generous to those, particularly of her own sisterhood, whose wants and distresses may lay a claim to her assistance and protection. With this open good heart she also possesses as equally an open honest countenance, which stands the palpable index of her mind;—if there is love to be traced sparkling in every feature of it, so are generosity and benevolence. Perhaps she may not rank in the first file of beauties, but take her all in all, she is as fine a woman—and as good a one, as any that now recline on the soft banks of the Idalian Grove.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Mrs. LEE.

AS the whole class of *fashionable Cypriads* will appear at distinct times, it is of little consequence which have the precedence in this work, — of little distinction, also, whether we first explore the Cytherian avenues of *Grosvenor* and *Berkeley-Squares*, or the more silent and rural shades of *Sloane-Street* and its vicinity.

It has been a difficult task to collect the materials of the whole *fashionable Cypriad*, and when we reflect on the numbers of them, and
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the vicissitudes of their fortunes, it must appear no easy matter to have accomplished it,—but the task commenced, it shall be actively prosecuted, though the whole bulk of reviewers appear in hostile opposition to crush it.—The author of these letters has been brought forward before this dread tribunal, and he must have the candour to acknowledge that he has, in many points of view, been well treated by the familiars of this literary inquisition.

The *fashionable Cypriad*, like the daughters of *Thalia* and *Melpomene*, take the most cautious means of concealing their original obscurity.—A ridiculous pride, and which only recoils upon them to their own mortification.

Mrs. *Lee*, similar to Mrs. *Scott*, is one of those whose anecdotes cannot afford much entertainment to the reader,—as there is nothing of the *dashing order* about her. She claims a distinction, however, (laying aside her title of being a *fashionable Cypriad*), to the foremost

rank, for though classed in the file of mistresses, she supports the appearance and character of the real wife,—and that, I believe, in every honorable sense of the word.

Mrs. Lee, in her younger days, was employed in different public houses, to carry porter about the neighbourhood ; and when arrived at years of more maturity, she was soon taught to throw off the humble attire of the innocent pot girl, for the more fascinating one of—the girl of gallantry.

Our heroine had not long got into this novel and thorny path of life, before she fortunately met with Mr. L——, who took her under his protection, and fixed her at his house in *Beaumont-Street*, where they have continued to reside ever since.

This gentleman's first step to render her an amiable and interesting companion, was to cultivate her mind with the flowers of education.

education.—For this purpose she had every proper master provided, to carry this laudable plan into execution; and she made a hasty progress in imbibing the lessons that were communicated to her.

This lady has lived some time with Mr. L—, and that in so retired a manner, as scarcely to have her name ranked among the *grand order of Cyprus*;—and, perhaps, it may be for the following reasons:

In the first place, she avoids all intimacies which tend to drinking bouts, and thereby acquiring the gout and effluvia of geneva,—a propensity which (I blush to say) the very first of the stylish class occasionally indulge themselves in.—In their morning visits to each other, the first exclamation on entering the parlour is,—“ Good gracious, what a cold raw day it is!—I’m afraid I shall catch my death, for venturing out such weather as here is,—(though she has just stept from a warm chariot, into a warm room),

room)—my Lord So-and-so, will never forgive me for it.”—The fair hostess then immediately takes the hint, and advises her to take a spoonful of Hollands, or Brandy, to keep out the cold.—“ Oh! fie, my dear, Hollands and Brandy at this time of the day!—couldn’t touch a drop of spirits in the morning for the world.”—Then coughing a little, and thrusting her knees into the fire—and then again, after a little pause of recollection,—“ Don’t you see, my dear what a cold I have already caught?”—“ Then be persuaded by me, my love, and *doey, doey* now, have a little drop of my cordial?”—“ Well, well, my dear, as you are *so pressing*, I don’t care if I do take a *little drop* of your Hollands,—But if my Lord So-and-so should smell me in the Park?”—“ A little bit of this sweet cake, my love, will take away the smell.”—This little drop, or spoonful, is then enlarged to a bumper of strong Hollands, which being swallowed, and the spirit conveying its force to the eyes, the fair guest, with some inarticulation of speech, exclaims,—“ Good Heavens! my love,
how

how could you fill the glass so full?"—a circumstance which by some accident escaped her observation before it was attempted to be drank. These idle customs soon grow into a habit, and when once indulged it is no easy matter to shake them off.

In the next place, Mrs. *Lee* never degrades herself by mingling in those kinds of amusements called *hops*, which in general prove the vulgar introduction to dangerous intimacies:—This keeps her, in a great degree, from all correspondence with her fair sisterhood, for even Mrs. *Cussans* herself, would go as far as *Hockley-in-the-Hole*, for the sake of a dance. In short, Mrs. *Lee* takes no pleasure in a life of dissipation,—she is happy in the society only of the gentleman she lives with, and her chiefest study is, how to make him so. Mrs. *Lee's* fair sisterhood have given her the Cambrian's appellation of *Beckey*, having done this, they must also allow, that our *Beckey*, as well as *Cadwallader's*, is a d——d fine woman.

LETTER XI.

Mrs. FINCH.

THE north of *England* claims the production of *Polly Finch's* beauty,—a beauty she may be accounted, though not one of the first water. Her origin was of a very humble nature,—she also has a sister in *London*, who has a child, both of whom are comfortably maintained and decently supported from the purse of *Mrs. Finch*.

Our heroine herself was a flower-maker, and in that early situation of life she most probably became

became the easy victim of seduction.—The gay world heard nothing of her, 'till about eight or nine years ago, when it found her first in the cytherian mansion of Mrs. *Duberry*, in *King's-Place*,—a place long since registered in the black chancery of the infernal regions, —and from whence she was transplanted to the more notorious soil of Mrs. *Weston*, in *Berkley-Street*. At the latter's house it was, that the Duke of C—— first beheld *Polly Finch*, and pleased with her beauty and manners, he removed her from thence, to *Hereford-Street*, *May-Fair*, where she still continues to reside. Here his Grace established the favourite, and rendered that establishment permanent, by presenting her with the house and all its elegant appendages. This connexion, however, was of no great durability, for the fickle complexion of the Duke soon induced him to look out for variety. —On leaving our heroine, however, he also left with her a settlement of £ 100. a year for life.

The

The dawn of Mrs. *Finch's* cyprian career shone forth with equal splendor and advantage,—for, independent of the above acquisitions, she was also in the possession of about £ 500. which she had carefully put by during her residence with Mrs. *Weston*.

It has been suggested, that the Duke of C—, after a formal separation, demanded a restitution of the plate he had presented his mistress with ! This suggestion we can attach little or no credit to,—a suggestion, perhaps, raised by Mrs. *Finch's* caution, in not always caring to display these *valuable* articles of luxury, on every trifling occasion.—

“ Polly’s rich sideboard seldom sees the light,
Clean is her kitchen, and her spits are bright ;
Her knives and forks all rang’d in even rows,
No hand molests, no servants discompose ;
A curious jack hung up to please the eye,
Forever still,—whose flyers seldom fly ;
Her plates unsullied, shining on the shelf,
For Polly dresses—*nothing but her self*”

Mrs.

Mrs. *Finch* had not long to lament the separation with her royal paramour;—such beauty as her's was sought after with avidity, and her happy genius looking smiling down, gave her over to the protection of *G. B—g*, Esq.

With this truly great character she lived some time, (at least off and on,) 'till his marriage finally dissolved the connexion.—This separation, however, had rather a serious effect, at the time, on the mind of Mrs. *Finch*, as her attachment to this gentleman was *supposed* to be strong, though it certainly was not altogether pure and steady; for, like the major part of her sisterhood. she must have some secret favorite, and for the more confident possession of whom, she introduced a young fellow into her house, and to Mr. *B—* also, as her cousin, and which identical cousin that gentleman once, very accidentally, surprized in the embrace of his mistress.—The discovery of this close cousin-ship, for fair *cousining*, indeed, it may be called, occasioned a coolness,—but nevertheless,
before

before the separation finally took place, Mrs. *Finch* had no cause to repine at the generosity and liberal disposition of her lover, whatever she might have had to lament the irrecoverable alienation of his esteem and affection.

When a woman, either by necessity or policy, is torn from the man whom she has loved and revered, she, for some time afterwards, gets callous to the feelings either of love or sensibility.—There is a species of apathy hanging about her, which renders all men indistinctly alike.—This may, perhaps, be more closely applied in the present instance; for though the fire of hopeless love might have been extinguished, the flame of *avarice*, like the sacred fire in the temple of *Janus*, was still kept sparklingly alive.—*Plutus*, the world says, is Mrs. *Finch's* chief household God, and every votary for her caresses, must sacrifice largely at his altar, before they can gain access to the softer avenues of love.

Chagrined,

Chagrined do I feel myself to broach one blemish against the fair subject of this correspondence.—It is not the grasping *God of Avarice* that I here particularly allude to:—No, every fair daughter of Cytheria should have a strong commendation, attached to the meritorious though difficult acquisition of prudence; for their purse, at all times, can make them respected, when their beauty and attractions have faded and expired. What I have to remark on this subject is, that there is a meanness about the manners and disposition of Mrs. *Finch*, which not only injures and renders her little in opinion, but affords an ill-natured scope for her envious sisterhood, to detract and drown those many beauties and amiabilities which she otherwise possesses, by perpetually starting against her, the little vice of *meanness*.

A woman may support a splendid appearance and still be prudent;—for example,—if a man annually registered his gains and losses at play, (so that he played for amusement and within
the

the bounds of prudence) he will find himself scarcely a gainer or loser in the end. Upon the same grounds, if I dined six days with my friends, on the seventh, I would give them an entertainment, equal in expence and style to those they had prepared for me. If *Mrs. Finch* was to follow this rule, she also would be no loser in the end, and at the same time would maintain and merit the character of possessing a generous and independent spirit.—But when, on the contrary, we see her prepare an entertainment artificially splendid, and that too with such nicety and fore-knowledge of her visitants' stomachs, as ultimately not to have the wing of a chicken left behind, for fear the servants should come in for a taste of the entertainment.—Why then, *Polly Finch*, the world, or rather that distinct class of it, thy Cytherian sisterhood, may well account and accord thee *mean*.

But in extenuation of these reports, suffer me briefly to state what I know from my own observations:—This, therefore, I can confidently
and

and chearfully alledge, that Mrs. *Finch*, in in every strict sense of the word, is an —*honest woman*,—that no creditor returns unsatisfied from her doors,—and that from acting up to this good principle, she has never been obliged, like the plurality of her sisterhood, to maintain her credit by the aid of *subscriptions*.

Mrs. *Finch* now jointly lives with the Earl of *M—x—gh* and Lord *S—ck—lle*, but as the beautiful Mrs. *Biggin* has now taken up her residence with our heroine, in *Hereford-Street*, the concern is most probably caried on in companies. *Polly*, not satisfied, however, with one *cher ami*, must have her favorites as heretofore, —the most conspicuous of whom is, an officer of the Light Dragoons, and the son of an eminent parliamentary orator.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Mrs. MASTERS.

AMONG the doubtful beauties of the present Cyprian day, this lady may be ranked as one.—Similar to Mrs. *Cussans*, she cannot be accounted a beauty; still like her, there is something so engaging and attractive in her features, manner, and person, as cannot fail of striking your immediate attention.—There is one essential beauty, however, that the *ci-devant* Dutches possesses, which our heroine comparatively loses and sinks, by neglect, and that is, the strict observance which the one pays to the style

style of her dress,—whereas, the other, in regard to this essential point, is unpardonably slovenly;—and we often witness, with regret, her beautiful and engaging countenance, obscured and environed by some species of dish-clout covering. If Mrs. *Masters* conceives that the charms of her features and the symmetry of her person can compensate for this egregious neglect of dress, she is most widely mistaken.—That same beauty she possesses, renders this neglect the more conspicuous. The lover pants with rapture to press those lips which exhale a breath like the soft breeze that has just escaped the rose, springing in the morn of May; but when enjoying this transporting pressure, he may not much approve of a kind of pudding cloth tickling his nose, or forming a kind of awing over his head.—No, with these sensations, he would as cheerfully dispense, as I should, to behold the fair subject of these remarks—for the future remove the cause of them.

I have not been able *exactly* to ascertain the thorough progress of this lady's Cyprian career, as she not only makes it a studied point of concealing the facts, but always has about her a kind of *Papillon* companion, who is her herald and armorial bearer, on all seasons and occasions, and who pictures all her friend's conquests, her high circumstances,—and other superior advantages, from the superfine-wove tissue of her own imagination. These silly attempts to conceal the truth may pass upon some, and keep them in the dark,—but with the active Biographer, the greater the supposed mystery, the more persevering is he to search into and discover the real facts.

Mrs. Master's original name, therefore, was that of *Sarah Marsden*;—but, like Mrs. Cussans' she conceived that *Louisa Masters* carried with it a more pleasing intonation than plain *Sally Marsden*. Her origin must have been of a very humble descent, for, when very young indeed, she vended ballads, or little pamphlets about
the

the streets of the Metropolis. After this, I find her living in a menial capacity, with Mr. *M——d*, then a respectable grocer, in *Broad-Street*,—in this gentleman's service she continued, I believe, some time.

The cloud which hangs over the particulars of Mrs. *Masters's* life, though it must sometimes expand, to admit the sudden streaks of light that occasionally burst upon it; still these are no more than partial glimmering rays, which being unavoidably mingled with an equal ratio of obscurity, from a kind of twilight, by which you may easily discover the object of figure, but not be able exactly to discriminate its features and impression :—But, nevertheless, with the assistance of a Jack-o-lantern, I, perhaps, may discover some haunts of this little sly fairy.

The first time, therefore, that I find her in lodgings was in *Queen-Street, Golden-Square* ;—I trace her from *Broad-Street* to this place, and if my lantern did not mischievously deceive me,
it

it was her master that I saw conduct her there. —Pretty little *Sally* was always a great favorite with the good-natured Mr. *M——d*, and it was one of his greatest pleasures that she should always wait on him at table.—I think I could not well mistake his person, for, to the best of my recollection, he was a head taller than any of his—*apprentices*.

It must have been in *Queen-Street* where Mrs. *Masters* met with *F—ch—r*, the hair-dresser, as the next lodging she went to was of considerable more consequence, and attended with circumstances of more style.—Previous to this meeting, therefore, whether it took place in *Queen-Street*, or in any other house, it is certain, that our heroine had tasted of the Cyprian stream, and that most probably from the hand of her master, Mr. *M——d*, but as my Jack-o-lantern could not wave me to the island of *Cytheria*, I was obliged to stand at the other side of the shore, without knowing what to think of the affair.

F—ch—r

F—ch—r was certainly a very great friend to Mrs. *Masters*, and relieved her from various temporary embarrassments.—He gave her, also, an insight into the world, and taught her to regulate her conduct in such a manner that she might prosper in it:—Being a genteel handsome man, she could not, it is to be supposed, refuse him—*her love*.

Our knight of the comb was at this time a man of taste and fashion in his calling, and he took great pains to enroll Mrs. *Masters* among the file of the *Fashionable Cypriad*. Our heroine's hair was formerly of a ruddy hue,

"Her amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run,
With graceful negligence, and shone against the Sun."

But it was now changed by the artificial means of *F—r*, into ebony tresses,—neither of them then dreaming, that red, flaming, carrotty wings would ever come into fashion.

When

When *Mrs. Masters* quitted *Queen-Street*, it was for more elegant lodgings in *Poland-Street*, where she resided with an elderly cavalier.—How long she continued in this situation I cannot say, but I hear of her afterwards, in several cytherian mansions; where her intrigues, of course, were universal and indiscriminate. In this fickle and thorny course of life she continued for many seasons, till she met with *Mr. Ty—s—n*, with whom she lived for some time. This gentleman has settled a handsome allowance on *Mrs. Masters*; it is an allowance, I believe, for life, though not at the free disposal of the lady.—On *Mr. T——’s* marriage the connexion ceased of course, which circumstance struck so poignantly on the spirits of our heroine, as to have induced her to make some rash attempts on her own life.

Since this period *Mrs. Masters* has lived with various characters, both Jews and Gentiles, among the former we may particularly distinguish *H—g—r*, of *St. Mary Axe*, who, after
having

having splashed and dashed some considerable time about Town with our heroine, was at last obliged, by the menaces of his family, and the apprehension of bailiffs, to *dash* off to the *West-Indies*. — But we believe he has lately been enabled to return to his own country again.

At this period you could scarce turn a corner of any of the fashionable streets, but you fell in with Mrs. *Masters*, in her curricie.—Indeed, this lady is as excellent a charioteer, as she is a horsewoman; but when she paid her summer visit to *Brighton*, and when her paramour was lost and forgot in the mists of *London*, she then resigned the reins to her favorite Capt. *F—ll—r*.

This gentleman has long creamed the milk of Mrs. *Masters's* affections.—He, in fact, is the stationary *cher ami*.—Our heroine's quarters in *Berkley-Street*, where she now lives, are handsome, and bordering on the elegant; but if gossip report whispers true, or my jack-o-lantern does not deceive me, it is said, that though

the cabinet be convenient, the board is not very plentiful and splendid.

Mrs. *Masters* herself is very abstemious in her food and beverage, and being so herself, she makes the servants follow the example;—scarcely providing more for dinner than what will just suffice for the whole house.—Her table at all times is meanly and scantily furnished, and when she receives company, which is but very seldom, the fare they meet with ill corresponds with the stylish character of the hostess. Mrs. *Finch*, Mrs. *Scott*, and our heroine, would form a very congenial trio.

Though possessing, like those ladies, a narrow cast of mind, still like her fair cotemporaries, Mrs. *Masters* inherits an equal portion of honesty and fair principle.—The world, in this instance, may say, that they all act rightly, avoiding, as they should do, the dangerous shoals which Mrs. *Cussans*, and others, run themselves into, by repeated extravagancies;
but

but I say, on the contrary, they neither act wisely or prudently. There should be a due medium preserved.—If extravagance renders a woman dangerous, so does meanness make her contemptible.—Appearances at all times may be preserved, without precipitating into one excess or the other; for every thing carried on to an absurd extent, must be allowed—excess—whether in profusion or parsimony. There are many little superfluities which *Mrs. Finch*, *Mrs. Scott*, and *Mrs. Masters* could very well spare, (even if in distress, which is far from being the case of either) without going to the miserable alternative of stinting themselves and their menials*.—These restrictions and forbearances, to a liberal mind, must always appear degrading.

Mrs. Masters, nevertheless, possesses many good and amiable qualities.—She is modest in her deportment, affable in company, engaging in conversation,

* She generally keeps a large piece of solid beef locked up in a closet, which she cuts out in steaks for the servants' dinners.

conversation, and reserved to strangers. She is a Woman that forces your attention and commands your admiration. Such is her modest deportment at all public places of amusement, that she never would strike a stranger with her being—a *Cypriad*.—If she can be reserved, she can also be gay, lively and facetious.—In short. putting aside the contrast of private manners and habits, and adhering only, as an impartial observer, to exterior appearances, I know not which I could rather prefer—*Sophia Cussans* or *Louisa Masters*,—for neither, in the strict sense of the word, are beautiful, but still both are equally attractive and engaging.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Mrs. DASHWOOD.

OUR present heroine, though she is not one of those *dashing Cytherians* whose name is distinguished every evening in the box books of the Theatres, like those of Mrs. *Cussans Masters*, *Baynton*, *Sumner*, *Loveden*, &c. still she is equal,—nay superior, in point of distinction and elegance, to the major part of her fair sisterhood.

Mrs. *Dashwood* is the daughter of a respectable farmer, in the county of *Sussex*, of the

name of P—tt. When very young, she was seduced from her family by the then Mr. ——— now Sir John D—w—d, with whom she cohabited for some years, and from whom she continues her present name.

Upon Mr. D—'s marriage with Miss B—dh—d, he settled £100. a year upon his *faithful* and *forsaken chere amie*, though his father, Sir John, was known to have declared, on the occasion, that he would rather have seen his son, by a thousand degrees, *married* to his *mistress*, than to his *elected wife*:—A convincing proof that our heroine partook of the old gentleman's esteem in a very high measure, and which she, no doubt, as highly merited.

After this cruel separation Mrs. *Dashwood* intrigued indiscriminately, 'till I find her with Counsellor L——s, with whom she lived some little time. Unfortunately for her she deserted the black coat for the red one, and Captain M—x—ll supplanted Mr. L—— in the affec-
tions

tions of his mistress ; and who, very *generously*, lived with our *silly heroine* whilst she had a shilling remaining ; though it appears, that on the commencement of this connexion he could not account himself the *master of one*.

With the Captain, Mrs. *Dashwood* lived, or (as report will have it) he lived upon her, for three or four years, in which period she sold the £ 100. a year to Sir *John* again, for £ 1200. which was mostly applied to the use of her paramour, on consideration of a bond given by him, for the re-payment of its appropriation.— This bond, it is said, remains in *statu quo*, and the donor of it, after leaving his imprudent and too generous *chere amie* in the greatest embarrassment, eloped with a daughter of General *P—c—tt's*, to whom he was soon afterwards married. In taking this step, he entertained the idea of coming into the possession of a good fortune, but in this, it appears, he was thoroughly disappointed.

Subsequent to this unfortunate connexion, Mrs. *Dashwood* lived with Captain *H—ll*, about a year; his regiment being then ordered to the *West-Indies* was the cause of their separation,—a separation, I believe, attended with much regret to both parties.

To this gallant soldier succeeded Mr. *D—s*, the banker, who made our heroine a provision of four guineas weekly,—a sum, however, inadequate to support her househo'd expences, and little according (as she conceived) with the affluent circumstances of the person who allowed it.—This pecuniary restriction made her seek for other protection, and among her new gallants was Captain *B—k—th*, of the Guards, who, from the first infixed himself so deeply and firmly in the affections of Mrs. *Dashwood*, that the banker finding himself neglected, and frequently ousted from the nest, where he had been accustomed to find repose from the fatigues of diurnal business, he at length, very prudently,

prudently, left his fickle mistress to the gallant of her choice*.

Mrs. *Dashwood* is what you may call a *beauty in miniature*, and such is the perfect symmetry of her leg and foot, as to have been made a model for a finished piece of sculpture.

To conclude with this lady, I shall just observe, that she has brought up a sister in the mantua-making line, and, for the accommodation of her pocket and her business, she has allotted an apartment for *her sole use*, at her house, in *Beaumont-Street*, near *Portland-Place*; and so much the reverse does she act in this point of view, to the generality of her sisterhood, that she discourages, and indeed prevents her from visiting all places of public amusement. Mrs. *Dashwood* likewise protects and schools the child of another sister, who lives, and has a large family, in the county of *Sussex*.

* I have not had an opportunity of informing myself, whether Mrs. D. still lives with Captain B. or with whom else.

LETTER XIV.

Mrs. PITT. (Ci-devant.)

THIS lady, with *Mrs. Robinson*, are the only *two* who will be introduced in the early part of this correspondence, who do not move at present in the gay circles of *Cytheria*.—But here I must observe, and that with the most rigid adherence to truth, that in point of beauty, person, and attraction, they have not left their like behind.—Among the fashionable hemisphere, nevertheless, their remembrances are still alive, and obscured as they are at present under a temporary cloud, the gay and gallant, will, no doubt, avail

avail themselves of every opportunity to learn something more of those who once bore away with them the envied wreaths of Cyprus.

I shall not attempt to enter into a comparative view of these ladies distinct beauties and attractions, but I believe no Cytherian cotemporary could boast of higher claims to these distinctions, than the *ci-devant* Mrs. Pitt.

Our heroine was the daughter of some obscure tradesman of the name of *Cooke*.—Her brother, who was a carpenter, was occasionally engaged in extricating her from some of her embarrassments, and her mother always resides with her, in the capacity of a servant.—From what rude and barren soils do the finest plants sometimes spring.

The earlier part of Mrs. Pitt's life was spent, as it commenced, in obscurity.—With her first gallant she lived some time in mean lodgings; nor was she ever known or distinguished

guished, 'till she appeared under the Cyprian roof of Mrs. *Weston*.

In the mansion of this once celebrated priestess, her indisposition for some time formed an obstacle to her appearance among the gay and dignified visitors that resorted thither; for we remember at one date, Mrs. *Weston* kept open house and open tables, which were frequented by the most distinguished characters. But Mrs. *Pitt* happening, by accident, to catch the eye and attention of the *P——e of W——s*, as she was passing from the parlour apartment to go to her own, he prevailed upon her to join his company, among whom were *George P——tt*. This gentleman became immediately enchanted with our heroine's beauty and figure, and hearing of her indisposition, he ordered every medical assistance to be obtained for her at his own charge, before he left the house. He afterwards kept her in Mrs. *Weston's* mansion fifteen months, and from that time she took, and always continued, her protector's name.

Mrs.

Mrs. Pitt was a woman of *general intrigue*—She not only boasted of holding in her chains all the young branches of the *R——l F——y* at one time, but some of the elder appendages to it also.—Indeed, her personal attractions and engaging manners must have rendered these numerous connexions unavoidable; for no man who ever beheld her, could resist admiring her.—Added to this, she always had her train of *favorite* gallants, which made a cohabitation with a particular individual—impracticable.—Her features, indeed, were animation itself.—When she smiled, teeth, white as ivory, contrasted the vermillion of her lips; and such was the harmony of her voice, when elevated to the height of merriment, that it might be distinguished among a chorus of others.—Her shape was elegant—her carriage equally, if not more so.—In short, recollection can give but an imperfect sketch of the charms that Mrs. Pitt possessed;—charms that rendered her a general object of admiration, and gained her the
esteem

esteem of the most distinguished characters in the kingdom.

“ Her face so fair, as flesh it seemed not,
But heav’nly portrait of bright Angel’s hue,
Clear as the sky, without e’en blame or blot,
Tho’ goodly mixture of complexion’s dew,
And in her cheeks the vermill’d red did shew,
Like roses in a bed of lilies shed,
The which ambrosial odours from them threw,
And gazer’s sense with double pleasure fed
Able to heal the sick, and to revive the dead.”

When our heroine left Mrs. *Weston*, she took lodgings in the same house with Mrs. *S. Williams*, in *Curzon-Street*, where they mutually carried on an extensive sway of gallantry :—but a little fracas taking place (for the cyprian dames can seldom agree long together) Mrs. *Pitt* removed to *Boulton-row*, where she continued to intrigue with as much indiscrimination as ever. Here she lived in a manner with Mr. *T—t—r*, who allowed her a weekly stipend ; but neither his society or his allowance being congenial to her,

her feelings and extravagance, she gallanted it on, with her accustomed rapidity, though a gentleman, whom the gay world calls *Little Dr—w*, certainly stood her most distinguished favorite.

During the course of our heroine's numerous intrigues, (which, to follow distinctly would only prove tedious to the reader) it is to be supposed that her pecuniary receipts were very considerable;—indeed they were so to a most extensive degree.—Still such was her extravagance and thoughtlessness in proportion, that she was continually in the merciless power of the bailiffs; and no woman, (if we except Mrs. *Robinson*,) was a more frequent visitor, or a more welcome guest, at those dens of imposition, called Spunging-Houses.—Her imprisonments, towards the latter part of her Cyprian career, (though at this day she cannot be more than two-and-thirty years of age) in these infernal sepulchres of human misery, frequently
extended

extended to some weeks, and in the long vacations, to some months.

In the very prime, however, of Mrs. Pitt's attractions, such was her profusion in pecuniary concerns, that at different periods she is supposed to have received upwards of fifty subscriptions, some to a very large amount indeed, to extricate her from her various embarrassments.—The P—of W—s, the Dukes of Y— and C— General St. L—g—r, and Colonel H—rv—y As—t—n, have actually made collections for her *themselves*, in the Assembly Room at *Brigh-ton*, whilst she has been in custody of the *Sussex* bailiffs, at her own lodgings.—Indeed, such was the attractive beauty of her person, and her insinuating carriage, that they even forced the utmost attention, admiration, and pity, of her own sex, so as to assist her on these melancholy occasions ; and at the head of these subscriptions were often to be found the names of the Dutchess of R—t—d, Mrs. F—tzh—t, Miss Pigott, the Dutchess de Picenne, and many other women of
the

the first fashion, who were then classed among the ladies of the Prince's Party : though at the same time it may be a questionable point, but that many of them, whilst they candidly allowed her every pity and protection, that oppressed beauty could claim, that some of them also secretly repined at her participating favors, which they, as married women, conceived themselves solely entitled to.

But the subscriptions coming so frequently, the men at length became weary of them, and Mrs. Pitt, to avoid her creditors, fled to *Paris*, Here, also, she soon got herself involved, and having no principle to discharge her debts, when she possessed the actual means to do so, she was obliged to hit upon another expedient to silence the clamour of her duns.—She gave them notes, drawn upon her own house (as she call'd it) in *Boulton-Row* ;—the bills were accepted in *London*, but neither the party or the money, at the time of payment being forthcoming, an execution was put into the house, but the bill-holders.

holders to their severe mortification, soon found that it belonged to a Mrs. *D—mm—d*, and not to our heroine, who had only been a lodger there.

Mrs. *Pitt*, however, by some means found her way safe back again to the white shores of *Albion*; and whether it was before she left this country, or on her return, that she met with Mr. *Or—lle A—br—y*, I have not been able to ascertain, but it is well known she entirely ruined this young gentleman by her extravagance, and at last precipitated him in the horrors and gloom of a prison.

Our heroine was, at one time, apparently devoted to the pursuits of the stage,—a pursuit which the harmonious tones of her voice,—her expressive and animated countenance,—together with her majestic figure, might have been attended with considerable success and eclat; but her timidity overwhelmed all these perfections, for when she attempted to rehearse a character
her

her fears thoroughly impeded her articulation. Rehearsals she has attempted, at several provincial Theatres, and once, if I remember right, she essayed the rehearsal of *Juliet*, on the boards of *Covent-Garden*, but in this attempt her timidity so far prevailed that she could not get through the first scene of her part.

Our heroine was attached also to the heroes of the stage, as much as to the stage itself; and it is very extraordinary that some of these gentlemen could not conquer her dramatic bashfulness. *J. G. H—l—n*, Esq. I believe, was her favourite *Romeo*, who had then newly made his appearance in the dramatic hemisphere, and of which he has long since rendered himself a brilliant ornament, both by his professional ability and his private deportment;—and so far as may relate to the connexion between him and *Mrs. Pitt*, I can truly add, that in this one instance she not only possessed the envied lover, but also—the finished gentleman.

“Th

“The World’s a wood, in which all lose their way,
Tho’ by a different path each goes astray.”

Now, our heroine, having lost her way so many hundred times, it was a great point of chance but what she had stuck fast at last.—After experiencing, however, the various huffs of fortune, and all the vicissitudes of prosperity and distress, she at length became a reclaimed and honest woman, by being made the wife of Mr. S—tt, a provincial actor, who, having a comfortable independency bequeathed him by a relation, quitted the stage, since which they have retired to a remote and romantic part of the country. They have lived in this recluse situation for four or five years, and enjoying, as they do, all the comforts of life, they apparently never wish to re-enter into the bustle and perplexities of the greater world,—wisely preferring mental happiness and an independent state, to to every other superficial consideration.

And

And now, before I conclude, fain would I recommend the progress of Mrs. Pitt's life to the attention of *the fashionable Cypriad*;—fain would I hold it up as a lesson for them to steer their future conduct by!—Let them mark their fair sister's early career, and see to what a fruitless end a series of extravagance and dissipation arrived at last;—to what misery, also, it led,—for surely the horrors and apprehensions of a prison being continually before her, must have been *misery indeed*!—Though still in the prime of her beauty, Mrs. Pitt became disesteemed and neglected by her most active protectors, for her thoughtlessness, profusion, and bad principle;—her charms (powerful as they latterly were) could not, at one time, even supply or command the necessaries of life!—Alas, how many fair Cytherians do I daily perceive pursuing the same ill-fated track, careless of what's to come, and only thoughtful of the pleasures of the present day. Whilst gliding gaily in their elegant chariots, through the vortex of dissipation, they never think of casting a retrospective view

view on the lofty and dreary walls of the many prisons with which the Metropolis abounds; and where hundreds of their poor unfortunate sisterhood have been plunged in infamy, or have perished with want, from having once led the same unthinking course of lives *as they are doing now*.—Or, still more distressing, to behold the solitary confines, where the poor miserable maniac* groans away her weary hours and days, thither led by the consuming maddening power of dissipation.—Here indeed is an awful subject for the most serious contemplation!!—Ere then it is too late, ye fair daughters of Idalia, check this improvident career!—make it your future resolve to be cautious, prudent, and saving, as far as propriety and your situation will allow; and when the heat of youth and the turbulence of passion have subsided into calm reflection, you will then find, how far superior a life of competence and retirement (which the once dissipated *Nancy Pitt* now tranquilly enjoys

* The beautiful Mrs. Barker is now in one of these melancholy places.

joys) is, to the uncertain prostituted pleasures of a *Cyprian* life.

There are some women, however, who, from habit and inclination have such a natural antipathy to reform, that they prefer spending their whole lives in the professional practice of debauchery and infamy;—though I think I can freely say, that I do not believe there are any at present, among those whom I have selected in the early part of this work.

Such then as I shall now express, are these miserable women's rise, decline, and fall,—a wretched picture indeed, but too true a one!—

A character of this description first rises from her original obscurity, through the youthful charms of her person; and soon acquiring notoriety, she gradually ascends the *Cyprian* ladder, step by step, till her good fortune conducts her to the very summit.

■ During

During this period, which may last perhaps for six or seven years, she has enjoyed the honor of being drank as a favorite toast, at all the gay and fashionable taverns about Town—has been the mistress, by turns, of all the dashing young men of fashion—and perhaps has rolled in equipages superior to all her cytherian cotemporaries.—All these enjoyments last for a time—the men at length get weary and surfeited, she is supplanted by novelty—and neglected by her former fashionable friends, she gets neglected by every one else;—for, when the stamp of fashion is once erased, the old coin will seldom pass current any where.—She now becomes a blank as it were, and never having the prudence and precaution of looking forward to the *rainy day*—(that eventful day, which, sooner or later must arrive)—she begins gradually to descend from the envied summit she has so long retained, 'till at length she is under the necessity of frequenting the lobbies of the Theatres, and the Bagnios in *Covent-Garden*, to gain a bare subsistence. This wretched and uncertain career
of

of life continues for some few years, 'till repeated debaucheries and diseases bring on the wrinkles of old age, before she has attained the meridian of life.—She then becomes a walking procuress, and skilled in all the arts of intrigue and seduction, entices many an innocent creature away from her happy paternal threshold.—And, last of all, necessity, leagued with infamy, and with a character too far blasted to admit of any other society, she becomes some common woman's hireling, when Geneva, and other intemperate remedies to obliterate reflection, soon puts an end to her life and obliquy together;—and now having no friends to provide her with a decent funeral, she is clapped up in a wooden casement, *pro forma*, at the expense of the parish, and from the burial ground her body is soon afterwards conveyed into some neighbouring-surgeon's hands, for *dissection*,

“Crush'd by misfortune,—blasted by disease,
And none—none left to bear a friendly part.”

LETTER XV.

Mrs. HARDY.

THIS beautiful and accomplished daughter of Cytheria, is the natural child of General *H—y*, and half sister to Captain *H—y*, who, before the war, was always one who had the honor of being ranked among the *P—* of *W—s's* suite. Her education and endowments sprung from the fertile sources of *France* and *Italy*, where nature and art combined to smile upon and adorn both her mind and person.

There

There is no woman about Town who has more marked attention paid her than Mrs. *Hardy*. The nobility, so far from avoiding her, in the fashionable promenades, on the contrary esteem it a distinction,—nay, an entertainment, to enjoy the society and conversation of our beautiful and accomplished heroine.—I am happy to single out this fair instance, as there are very few of *The fashionable Cypriad* whom a man of fashion, or, rather a man of sense, with fashion attached also to his character, would wish to walk or talk with in public. The majority, though they possess all the incentives of beauty, to attract similar marks of attention, still they are in general so ignorant and insipid as to defeat all the purposes of rational entertainment, for their want of powers to engage in easy conversation;—they want, also, that polished behaviour,—that fascinating power, to throw a fairy link (as it were) over the mind, which chiefly commands the esteem and attention of the real man of sense and fashion.

Mrs. *Hardy* lived, or, I may blot and add, with more propriety, *existed* for many years with the Honorable *G——e C—nw—y*, between whom a strong and mutual attachment long subsisted. To his fair *chere amie* this worthy character may be supposed in a great measure to have been indebted for many favors whilst his purse was in a state of insolvency.—Jealous of her he was to the extreme point, but still it cannot but be supposed, that Mrs. *Hardy* must have *intrigued* to effectuate that united support and maintenance which their circumstances and appearances must have claimed and called for.

No man or woman (let their distinction be what it may) can possibly live happy in such a state as this;—for bitter reflections are sure to escape one party,—and retorts, as equally severe, are returned by the other.

Here is another instance (among the many I shall have an occasion of introducing) where
birth

birth and fashion drown and smother the voice of prejudice. No man, perhaps, received greater favors from a woman than the Honorable G—— C—— did from Mrs. *Hardy*, but in lieu of being dispraised and run down, by the voice of slander and calumny, as another of less consequence would have been, he was envied and flattered, and all the severity of retort expunged, which falls on the shoulders of a man, acting up in the same light, but whose situation and circumstances, in point of birth and family connexions, happen to be far inferior, though at the same time his mind and person may have been enriched and adorned with the superior gift of mental endowments and personal recommendation.

After this connexion had subsisted for five years, or thereabouts, Mrs. *Hardy* was obliged, through the embarrassed state of her circumstances, and the apprehensions of a prison, to fly her house and seek for protection and liberty in the country, under her sister's roof,

which she made her assylum 'till her affairs could be put in some train of settlement, and this being in some shape effected, our heroine returned a little better than a twelvemonth ago, to her former residence in *Bolton-Street*.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Mrs. JORDAN.

THERE is no character I have set down to with more pleasure and satisfaction than the one now before me.—Mrs *Jordan's* introduction into this work, under the denomination of a *fashionable Cypriad*, might not, perhaps, have been expected: But as the highest rank of females, who have afforded the least opening for the investigation of their *gallantries*, and the consequent particulars of their *lives*, will be impartially classed on the Cytherian file, as times and circumstances may admit, in the course of this

work; Mrs *Jordan*, certainly, is of too much consequence to escape attention;—a work, indeed, which when completed will form an interesting and entertaining *Biography* of the finest women in the Kingdom.

Mrs. *Jordan's* memoirs are well known in the Theatrical world; but as they may not be so among the *fashionable Hemisphere*, I shall give them, in some slight shape, as they are to be found in the Theatrical registers, introducing, however, several original anecdotes never before published;—for when two persons have made themselves perfectly acquainted with *one subject*, it is not to be supposed that there will be a great difference in the distinct relations.

Mrs *Jordan's* father was a Captain in the army, he was possessed of some fortune and is said to have been a gentleman of great personal accomplishments. It is to be lamented, at the same time, for the sake of an amiable wife and an equally amiable offspring, that he was not possessed

possessed of a few mental ones also. The exterior appearance of the tree was stately and comely, whilst the interior was corrupt and depraved. — When stationed in *Wales*, Captain *B—d* became enamoured of the daughter of a *Welsh* clergyman. — From some private domestic circumstances they were obliged to elope to *Ireland*, where they were married, both being then under age.

Many years rolled on in a state of uninterrupted happiness, and the fruits of this mutual conjugal tenderness were nine children. But the infernal spirit must make himself busy sometime or another, sooner or later, in what concerns our human happiness, — he therefore conjured up a lawyer, in the person of a Dr. *B—d*, a civilian, in *Dublin*, to marr and destroy poor Mrs. *B—d*'s future prospects of comfort and independence. — This *worthy* and *disinterested* man was father to our Captain, and who procured the marriage to be annulled, as being made in minority; that his no *less worthy son*, (who had

lived so many years, in the eye of God and the world, with the most amiable of women, and who had borne him so many children) might receive the hand of a worthless woman of great fortune, who had long been his known admirer.

The Captain had by this time attained the rank of Colonel, and having by his marriage got into the possession of a splendid fortune, he very humanely, and like a soldier,—a gentleman,—a tender father—and affectionate parent—took the earliest opportunity of sending his wife and all her little ones, back to her native place,—*generously* allowing them a small sum for their maintenance.

It is said, notwithstanding the riches the Colonel acquired by this new alliance, he never enjoyed his former serenity of mind with his second wife.—It would have been a great pity if he had.—The same infernal spirit that reigned in the bosom of the selfish civilian, must often have delighted to represent before
his

his tortured imagination, the images of his discarded wife and innocent offspring.—Whether this was the real case or not, I cannot pretend to ascertain, but the Colonel died soon after his second marriage.

The second Mrs. *Bland* having secured her fortune, she very nobly refused the smallest assistance to her husband's children upon his demise. The friends of the latter, however, with a *partial* degree of humanity, did something for them; but as if the fallen are always afterwards to be oppressed and trod upon, they took no more notice of the poor mother than if she had been laying in the same grave with her cruel and ungrateful husband. Miss *Bland* (our present heroine) was now determined to make a struggle for the independency of her mother and self, and therefore looked forward to the stage, as the soil where her genius would best thrive and succeed.

In the first career of public life, Miss *Bland* was distinguished on the boards of the *Dublin Theatre*,

Theatre, under the fictitious name of Miss *Francis*. This name, it is said, she adopted upon the ground of family pride;—if so, it was an erroneous pride,—for when our heroine was deserted by her wealthier kindred and exposed, at that tender age, to the vicissitudes and distresses of the world, she need not have shrunk from exposing also that name from whence sprung all her mother's misfortunes, and which, by exemplifying and extending to their view, would rather have given her a claim to the world's pity and protection.

This same pride, or ideal family consequence, (though what I am going to observe here can have no relation to Mrs. *Jordan*,) has had its full sway among the sons and daughters of the *Sock* and *Buskin*;—they take the most diligent care to conceal their *family secrets*, as well [as the fair daughters of *Cytheria*, though every evening that I attend the *Theatre*, I recognize the Knight of the Comb and the Rzaor. in the hero of some Tragedy;—Knights also of the

Hammer and the Needle, in Comedy and Opera, and a *Lady Betty Modish* who has often handled a mop in the precincts of *Covent Garden*.—Why support, therefore, such false and ridiculous ideas of pride and affected secrecy?—For my part, I should laugh over such circumstances, and glory in the idea that I have been enabled, by my own merit and industry, to raise myself from obscurity to a station where my talents command respect and esteem from every man of real sense and understanding.

Miss *Francis* did not long remain in the genial soil of *Hibernia*, for being seduced in the managerial Haram, she fell a struggling victim to the then grand Seignior's uncontrollable power. No sooner, however, was she released than she fled from *Dublin*, and, accompanied by her mother, went to *Leeds*, where the *York* company were then performing.

On Miss *Francis* sending for Mr. *Wilkinson*, the manager, (who, I really believe is one of
the

the kindest managers that the provincial Theatres can boast of,) he briefly interrogated our heroine respecting her abilities, and she as briefly informed him that she conceived herself capable of undertaking any cast of parts in the theatric list.—Upon this assurance he consented to grant her a trial, and to display the versatility of her talents, she made choice of the two contrasted charaters of *Calista*, of in the *Fair Penitent*, and *Lucy*, in the *Virgin Unmask'd*, giving the audience, also, a vocal treat, between the play and farce.

The curiosity of the people at *Leeds* was much excited a seeing this first appearance announced, and being great encourage's of dramatic talent, the house in consequence was crouded on the night of her *debut*. She performed both characters with great spirit, effect, and humour,—and was immediately put down, in the public opinion, as an actress of infinite promise.—The manager considered her as a valuable acquisition, and agreed to give her a salary

salary of *Fifteen Shillings* a week, his highest not exceeding a *Guinea and a Half*.

Miss *Francis*, in order to conceal her retreat, was obliged to change her name, and the origin of her present one was owing to the following curious conceit, which she relates, I believe, herself, as a fact. Having been describing the misfortunes and cruel treatment she met with in *Ireland*, she at length exclaimed, “*that she was* “*sure she had shed tears enough to overflow the* “*river Jordan.*”—Not having then fixed upon what name she should assume, that of *Jordan*, which she had just so emphatically mentioned, was hit upon by a friend, and she accordingly took it.

In this tranquil though humble situation, Mrs. *Jordan* was not suffered to remain unmolested.—As she had quitted *Dublin* before the expiration of her articles, she was threatened with an arrest, unless she immediately returned. In this crisis our heroine experienced the humanity

manity and benevolence of Mr. *Swan*, an elderly gentleman, well known and universally respected; who, after a short enquiry into the circumstances of her situation, being convinced her misfortune was not occasioned by her own misconduct, but by the artifice of others, actually released her from apprehensions of a prison, by paying the sum of £250. the forfeiture contained in her agreement, and ever after manifested to her the most paternal affection, and sincerest concern for her welfare and interest.

Mrs. *Jordan* continued in the York company for three years, a great favorite, and I need not add most deservedly so.—The manager also, to reward her improving talents, raised her to the first rank and salary in the theatre.

In this interval, however, our heroine's embarrassments, of the pecuniary kind, were frequent and urgent.—She had herself and a dear mother to support, upon a mere nothing, (for when we consider the expences in getting up
stage

stage dresses, and a thousand other little necessities, with this small pittance they could but barely exist.)—Notwithstanding all these depressions she had to encounter, she always preserved an invaluable energy of mind, which no misfortune could slacken, and which made her rise superior to every—hardship and distress.

I shall relate a circumstance here, which, had it taken place, would have made a wonderful alteration in the fortunes of our heroine.

During Mrs. *Jordan's* engagement at *York*, she was strongly urged by Mr. *George Inchbald*, then a member of Mr. *Wilkinson's* company, and son-in-law to Mrs. *Inchbald*, to enter with him into the holy obligations of matrimony.—Our heroine was as strongly inclined to the match as Mr. *Inchbald*, but Mr. *Smith* happening to see Mrs. *Jordan* at *York* races, and being charmed with her abilities, he recommended her to the proprietors of *Drury-Lane Theatre*,

Theatre, as a fair and capable second to Mrs. Siddons in the walk of Tragedy.—This recommendation was immediately accepted, and our heroine was engaged for the subsequent season, at the salary of £4. per week.

This reverse of fortune for the present interrupted the intended nuptials; for Mr. *Inchbald* thought proper to procrastinate the marriage ceremony, till he found how his fair one succeeded on the *London* boards. The success she experienced more than corresponding with his warmest expectations, attracted him to the Metropolis, to cement the happy union;—but, alas! poor *George* met with an unexpected and sorrowful reception,—for on sending up his name, he was informed, “That he was always welcome to a knife and fork, but that nothing further could hereafter seriously be thought of.”—What a strange revolution this simple circumstance caused in the lives and fortunes of these two lovers!—The one, at present, though possessing a strong genius and
great

great talents, ranking in the capacity of a poor strolling itinerant actor ; whilst the other (tho' every way deserving of it) is riding in her carriage, with the command of thousands at her power.

I shall now follow the Theatrical Register for a page or two, and then enter into Mrs. *Jordan's* character in a different point of view.

Our heroine soon perceived, on her arrival in the Metropolis, that her reputation in the line which she was engaged in, was likely to place her *second only* ; and as she knew her talents in Comedy had given universal satisfaction, and every new performer in *London*, was permitted to make choice of a part for their first appearance, she determined attempting the *Country Girl* ; a part which had lain neglected, though abounding in wit, intrigue, and humour. The peculiarity of the character, and the novelty of such a line of acting, aided by Mrs. *Jordan's* inimitable powers, surprized the public

lic with new scenes of the drama, which had been regarded with indifference, but which now appeared the legitimate offspring of the comic muse.

Novelty is the very soul of the stage.—The best pieces and the best performers fall by being too often seen:—and great as Mrs. *Jordan* undoubtedly is, much of her success may be attributed to the new line of acting she has introduced.—For, though *The Romp*, *the Country Girl*, and *Virgin Unmasked*, had been represented before, they had never been so much followed. The managers *doubled* her salary; but even £8. a week was a small sum for the money she brought the house—she remonstrated, but the managers very fairly replied, that the various persons they engaged at large salaries, who on trial proved use ess, justified their adherence to such bargains as were likely to reimburse them. They however raised her salary to £12. per week, and granted her two benefits in the season, at one of which, among other valuable presents,

presents, she received a purse from the club at *Brooks's*.

In 1733 *Mrs. Jordan* went to *Cheltenham*, where an elegant and valuable medal was presented her, as an acknowledgement for the great entertainment she had afforded them.—She resumed her station the following Winter in *London*, with renovated allurements; and may be said to have fairly beat *Melpomene* out of the field.

Her astonishing success is believed to have created great uneasiness in the house of *Kemble*, who dislike the comick muse, from her evident antipathy to them.—Every opportunity was sought of insulting *Thalia*, by abridging the importance of *Mrs. Jordan*.—She withdrew herself from the Theatre, and is said to have been offered a *carte blanche* by *Mr. Harris*—*Mrs. Jordan*, however, stated her grievance to *Mr. Sheridan*, who settled her at a salary of
£30.

£30. per week, which rendered her acceptance of Mr. *Harris's* offer unnecessary.

Mrs. *Jordan* performed in the summer of 1789, at *Edinburgh*, when *Jackson*, the manager, attempted to raise an odium on her, for not performing on the night she promised, gratis, and from which she was prevented by the death of her mother.

Her affection for her mother, who had ever been an indulgent parent, was extremely warm, and consequently she felt the most poignant anguish at her loss.—Indeed, the brightest part of her character is, that she is kind to her relations and generous to the needy—and *humanity*, says the moralist, is not only an indication of a feeling heart, but the strongest criterion of virtue.

So much for Mrs. *Jordan's* establishment in the dramatic hemisphere;—and now to matters of other import.—

When

When our heroine was at *York*, she always distinguished herself by the propriety of her private conduct, and the untaxed modesty of her manners;—rendering herself thereby the more amiable and distinguished, by supporting, and firmly protecting a breach, which had been so lately assaulted and violated.

Mrs. *Jordan*. therefore, in the view of a *Fashionable Cypriad*, claims a fair and honorable distinction.—Though always a *Mistress*, still she has always acted up to the rigid principles and œconomy of—the *Wife*.—She has never been lavish in her favours, but ever true and constant to the man she has lived with.

The public, some time ago, bore ample and honourable testimony of her conduct, in regard to her separation with Mr. *Ford*.—She bore this gentleman four children, three of whom are now alive.—She had ever comported herself like a constant wife,—an affectionate mother,—and a sincere friend,—ever solicitous and

on the watch for their united comforts and happiness.—This tender conduct, so far and justly gained on the esteem and affection of Mr. Ford, that he promised to make her—*his Wife*.

About this time the Duke of C——e offered Mrs. Jordan a *carte blanche*, if she would live with him.—Our heroine, without the least hesitation or disguise, and with the most open sincerity, laid these offers before her—*friend*.—The question now stood, whether he would fulfill his promise or not?—He demurred, and ultimately objected to keep to his word.—The consequence was, after living with Mr. Ford nearly seven years, she closed with the Duke's offers,—observing on the occasion,—“That if she was doomed to be a *mistress*, justice and affection demanded, that her *family*, as well as *herself*, had a right and claim to expect and do *the best for themselves*.”

Mrs. Jordan's present connexion with the Duke, is too well known to require further
comments

comments upon it.—His Grace has settled £800. a year on her for life, whilst the profit she acquires from her theatrical exertions, are carefully and punctually placed in the funds, for the future provision of herself and family.—Mrs. *Jordan* cautiously and wisely regards the wheel of fortune with a doubtful eye, and she has judiciously determined to prepare against its future necessities. Her reign cannot endure for the chance period of a long life, and when the yellow leaf of Autumn perches on her chearful brow, she may then indulge herself, and “*laugh and shake in Rabelai’s easy chair,*”—cheering her mind with this comfortable and happy reflection, “that whilst *fortune* favoured her in her younger days, *prudence* fortunately stood her guardian Angel, and by their friendly union she now possesses more content and tranquillity of mind, surrounded as she is by her children and her friends, than when the natural and exuberent passions of the heart were raised to the highest pitch.”

Mrs. *Jordan* principally resides with the Duke at *Bushy-Park*.—She has an excellent house of her own in *Somerset-Street*, where she lodges when the business of the Theatre commands her attendance.—His grace, however, seldom, if ever, visits there; and on these occasions it is customary for our heroine to breakfast in the morning with his Grace, at his apartments—

Mrs. *Jordan* has seven children living.—The eldest, who is a fine accomplished girl about fourteen, is the offspring of Mr. *D—y*, the late *Irish* manager.—She passes by the name of *Miss Jordan*. She has three children by Mr. *Ford*, who also pass by the same name; and three more, a boy and two girls, by the Duke, who were christened by the name of **Fitz-Clarence*. They are all under the care and education, (together with *Miss Jordan*, a sister of our heroine's) of the Rev'd Mr. *Lloyd*,

* *Fitz* signifies *Bast'rd*.—I 'don't see what absolute necessity there was of attaching this word to the children's names,

Lloyd, at *Ewell*, Chaplain to his Grace, who receives from Mrs *Jordan*, the yearly sum of £400. for their maintenance and instruction.

And now to follow up the above little soliloquy.—As a *Mother*, Mrs. *Jordan* will behold her children anxiously and attentively hovering over her declining powers,—blessing herself, as she surveys their fondness and affection, that fortune, and *her* prudence, have rendered them thus cheerful, happy, and independent.—The noble sentiments flowing from a liberal education, will teach them to reverence the *mother*, without sprinkling the tender emanation with any unworthy reflections on the —*father*.—And the base ungenerous tongue, that ignorantly reflects upon their own birth, that *education* will teach them to despise; whilst if necessary, it will also teach them to resent and chastise.—The sense ingrafted in their youthful minds, by the liberal and Christian principles of a *Lloyd*, will likewise teach them, that one Being is the great and universal Parent

of mankind; and that Being will instruct them that next to him, they owe all their love and homage to a fond—a tender, and ever anxious mother.

Fame on Jordan, as already bestowed her richest laurels, and hence forward may every domestic comfort accompany her to the last scene of the World's great Stage.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

Mrs. HARRISON.

IN most of our romances we find, that when *Orphans* are, by some fortuitous means, found under the protection of a poor cottager, if they chance to display, as they grow up in years, a superior command of person—a fine figure, and a beautiful countenance, then they must naturally be the offspring of some great Baron, or Lord Paramount, who, for some clandestine reasons, have cruelly deserted them to the protection of chance.—We will admit this conclusion, so far as it relates to romance, but why

cannot the same exterior requisites be attached to the deserted orphan of a poor villager, as well as a great Baron?—Idle distinction!—That this can I shall easily shew, in the subject now before me.

Mrs. *Harrisons's* original name was *Sophia Elizabeth Warder*.—Her life, indeed, displays such a scantiness of matter, that were it not for her beauty and fashion, she certainly would have remained unnoticed in this work.—There succeeds a still stronger point to claim my attention and pity,—*Sophia Harrison* is an orphan. She never experienced the fondness and indulgence of a parent,—of course, unknown, and uneducated, she was thrown upon the world's wide stage; and considering her in this forlorn light, she equally possesses a claim to pity and attention.

Do not tell me, that it is women who are absolutely depraved,—it is man that is really the object of depravity.—Even from the meanest wretch,

wretch to the embossed circle of royalty.—Women,—that is *women of the Town*, according to the libertine idiom, are thought to be *necessary evils*.—Why so?—when they could easily be made such necessary benefits. I have known those who have been habituated in the paths of prostitution, to have proved the tenderest and most faithful of wives.—Man first teaches them vice, and it is necessity afterwards that forces them to continue the meretricious traffic.—What must a woman's feelings be, possessing the smallest spark of sensibility, to *be obliged* to recline on an unknown fellow's arm?—What could necessitate her to humble—to sicken even under this disgusting embrace,—night after night—hour after hour—but dire necessity?—

“ Unhappy sex ! when beauty is your snare,
Expos'd to trials, made too frail to bear.”

The hapless wretch, that stands shivering in the cold damp street, eagerly grasping at every stranger's arm as he passes by, and inviting
15 him

him to her half uncovered bed, for the matin provision, and to satisfy in part the clamorous dins of her threatening hostile hostess,—is not, perhaps, more abject and distressed in mind and feelings, than the *Fashionable Cypriad*.—The poor illiterate street-walker catches at her prey, and just as she finds him she takes him.—The elegant and refined kept-woman, on the contrary, weighed down between the tormenting thoughts of *what she is* and *what she might have been*, reclines her heavy head upon her tearful couch, waiting, with anxiety, and with horror, for the man she lives with.—A man she loaths, abhors!—a gambler—a drunkard—a swindler—and when he *does* arrive, her ears are then dinned with his losses, or, her gaudy bed spoiled and contaminated, with the effusions of his intoxication.—Then, oh! ye daughters of blue-eyed chastity, point not the scoffing glance at these unfortunate fair ones as ye pass them by,—on the contrary, pity them;—and if they appear before ye in the mantle of poverty, distress and sorrow, endeavour to relieve them.—Afford them

them the chearful glance of hope—stretch out to them your protecting hand.—Ye are all the daughters of one Supreme Being—his first essence is Charity and Universal Benevolence!—and when ye all indistinctly appear before his awful tribunal, those tears and compassion you have tenderly shewn for these his poor—helpless—protectless children,—will be trebly remunerated on your own heads.

M^s. *Harrison*, when very young, (having not yet attained one-and-twenty) was seduced at the *Star and Garter*, at *Kew-Bridge*, by Lieut. Col. *E—sh—e*.—I next find her with *C—t—l*, Esq. with whom she cohabited for a short time in *Arlington-Street*, and whom she left in a state of pregnancy.—General *G—nn* afterwards introduced her to the Priestess of *Berkley-Street*, the deceased Mrs. *Weston*, where she of course submitted upon the old established rules, and infamous obligations, to receive the embraces of any indiscriminate visitor.

To this house of infamy succeeded Mrs. Oliver, a woman much more notorious than her predecessor.—Of all wretches, these are most disgraceful and pernicious to the community—Wretches who are only fit for the society of hangmen, and like them, to be ever avoided.—Indeed, the latter are not so criminal, as they act from necessity; whilst the others act from the natural viciousness of habit and inclination—

“ Monsters more fierce, offended Heav’n ne’er sent,
From Hell’s abyss, for human punishment.”

I have read somewhere, that there is a particular place in the infernal regions allotted for old b——ds; by the same good rule they shall have a snug distinct corner, laid apart for them, under a separate head, as a kind of summing up of this work,—as it would be even shameful and degrading, to class them among those *Fashionable Cypriads* I have selected for the former parts. All walking procuresses, likewise lo-
custers

custs who infest the Metropolis, shall have a black niche each ;—wretches whom I think more dangerous than all, as, by the subterfuge of conveying goods,—and other infernal contrivances, they gain access into honest tradesmen's families, and by perseverance and artifice, too often seduce away their innocent daughters.—But this is a mere outline of their diabolical practices.

The serail in *Berkley-Street* is very spacious, elegant and commodious for the unwieldy priestess's purpose. If *Hogarth* was alive, he could not have a better model for a jolly b——d, than *Mrs. Oliver*. As visitors are incessantly coming in at all hours of the night, by the same rule the poor martyrs, of inmates, are obliged to sit up to receive them—for they do not begin to dress for the sacrifice, till ten o'clock. This was the predicament that *Sophia Harrison* stood in when she was there; and I have been informed, that it is not at all unusual, for each girl to receive six or seven different drunken men
of

of fashion in one night—the priestess at the same time sitting up to receive a third of their prostitution, whilst the other part generally goes for board and lodging.—Oh horrible! horrible!

From the dreadful mansion of *Mrs. Oliver*, our heroine with great difficulty was got away by *Capt. Gr—t*. Under this gentleman's protection she was removed to *Berners-Street*, with whom she lived till he was ordered to the *West-Indies*.—This, as it appears, was a mutual attachment.—Some time after *Capt. Gr—t's* departure, *Mrs. Harrison* lived with *Capt. G—y*, but soon deserted him, on the former's return to *England*. They were again, however, soon obliged to part; since which period *Mrs. Harrison's* house in *Boulton-Row* has been the rendezvous of all the gay young men of fashion about town. Last summer, at *Brighton*, our heroine had nearly made a conquest of the Duke of *B—d*; but though her person attracted the attention and admiration, the envy of her Cyprian sisterhood,

sisterhood, by some unfair reports, alienated his Grace's affection from her.

It was at this fashionable place also, that our Heroine met with —— *H—cks*, Esq. and with this gentleman she continues at present to reside.

Mrs. *Harrison* truly possesses a feeling and a generous heart.—Her purse is always open to relieve the calls of sorrow and distress.—When she hears of any poor helpless female in her neighbourhood, who is lying-in, and in want of those necessities indispensable to that situation, she will attend the poor woman herself, and see that she has every requisite comfort provided for her.—In her disposition she is naturally thoughtless and extravagant,—but in point of principle, she is strictly correct and honorable.—In company she is pleasant and agreeable, possessing a great flow of spirits and good humour;—but when left to solitude and reflection, the beautiful *Sophia Harrison* will weep
many

many a heavy hour, and contemplate, with every poignancy that a heart of sensibility can in any manner possibly be supposed to do—*on what she is!*

One most essential and indispensable polish however, is wanting, to improve the manners and society of Mrs. *Harrison*, and that is—education;—a deficiency, that she is now assiduously endeavouring to remove, by employing the first masters to improve her. Her intellectual powers are at present strong, consistent, and rational,—stronger, in proportion, perhaps, as it frequently happens, from the mind not being cultivated in its infancy; for we often find untaught beings, possess a strong and vivid imagination.—In this instance, however, it appears a rich and genial soil, and will, it is most probable, with proper and tender cultivation, produce a kindly harvest.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Mrs. S. WILLIAMS.

THIS Lady, whose warmth of heart,—exhilaration of soul,—and energy of mind, often rendered her the subject of sisterly envy and concern, is the daughter of a once respectable tradesman of *Chichester*.

It being the destiny of our heroine, however, to move in a far different sphere than in that of a china-shop, chance accordingly ordered Major C—ch—ll to quarters at *Chichester*, where he took up his lodgings at the house of Mrs. Williams's.

liams's father.—It is here needless to comment on the consequences that succeeded ; suffice it to say, that the Major soon gained the affection, and afterwards the possession of our heroine's person ; and when he was obliged to leave *Chichester*, she followed him to *London*.

The conduct and elopement of the daughter was soon succeeded by the ruin of the father, who shortly after became a bankrupt both in mind and trade.—As the indiscretion, however, of the former, could not be healed, or recalled, she generously summoned filial reflection to her aid ; and in order to ameliorate the irreparable wound she had given a parent's feelings, she immediately found means to provide them with a handsome maintenance in *London*, which she has been enabled to continue to them to this very day.

From the arms of Major C——l, we next find *Mrs. Williams* under the cytherian roof of *Mrs. Weston*, which, indeed, was once the second

cond step a fine woman ascended, after the loss of character. From seduction she passed to prostitution.—Our heroine, though she could not boast of so much beauty as her sisterhood Mesdames *Pitt*, *Wyndham*, (then better known by the name of *Charlotte Muir*,) and *Finch*, then residing in the same mansion, till she attracted the attention, esteem, and friendship of the noblest visitors who resorted there.—The chief of whom was his Royal Highness the Prince of *W—s*, and who has continued his esteem and friendship for her to the present time.

Among the other votaries at Mrs. *Weston's* temple, for the favours of Mrs. *Williams*, was the late Lord *M—lsw—h*, who became so struck with our heroine's person and manners, as to remove her from thence, to his own house in *Grafton-Street*.—The fruits of this connexion was a child, but which connexion was suddenly dissolved, by the folly, imprudence, and depraved appetite of Mrs. *Williams*.

When

When the ennobled or opulent man expects a regular system of conduct and constancy to be found in his mistress, it can but be a mere fallacy practiced on his own imagination,—an inward conceit, to lull his feelings and cherish his vanity. What he sees or hears not, of course he cannot feel;—but, indeed, a man of sense, in these instances, if he has any regard to his feelings and his gratifications, should occasionally be as blind to the follies and dissipations of his mistress, as a father should to those of his son, first launching into manhood and the world; for you may as well attempt to keep the one from the brothel, as the other from privately intriguing.

In speaking, however, of Mrs. *Williams*, she debased her person and mutilated her fortune, by the grossest condescension; for not satisfied with privately intriguing, she stooped so meanly low as to take a lover under her patron's roof, and that too,—oh! shame upon thee, *Sarah*!—his own groom, and in whose embrace
she

she happened one day to be detected by his Lordship.

I need but observe, that this discovery occasioned an immediate separation.—The folly and baseness which Mrs. *Williams* had attached to her character in the former instance, obscures many beautiful tints which glow in the brief progress of her memoirs. An innate baseness of mind and appetite must be leagued with the prior concern, as no menial would attempt to take any licentious liberty with his mistress, without she threw out the first provocative, and by the irresistible lure of the one, the other not only forfeits the esteem and good report of his master, but also, when he applies for his loaf elsewhere, he is disregarded as a dangerous member in a family, for his former ill conduct and ingratitude;—for under similar circumstances, a fellow would take the same liberty with his master's wife, as he had previously done with his master's mistress.

I have

I have observed before, that the fruits of Mrs. *Williams's* connexion with Lord *M*—was one child.—This infant the mother was and is still distractedly fond of; and, indeed, it is a doubt on the amiable side of our heroine's character, which of the two she stands the most conspicuous for,—as being the fond child herself, or the fond mother.

His Lordship, however, was also deeply attached and much affected to this infant, and strongly wished to preserve it under his own immediate and more sufficient care and protection.—But here the mother's feelings prevailed,—she would not part with her infant,—her maternal tenderness conquered every persuasion,—every obstacle,—and rather than be divided from her child she cheerfully contented herself with the slender provision of £50. for its future maintenance, which was the sum, I believe, neither more nor less, that she received from his Lordship on their separation.

The

The indiscreet connexion that she had formed with her groom, followed her even to the house of Mrs. *Weston*, were having made an application to return to her former establishment, she was rejected by the offended priestess. In her sublime notions of honorable gallantry, she had made herself an object of pollution; though, I believe, there can no doubt exist, that if the favored groom had appeared before her altar, in a different dress and character, and freely contributed his golden incense, that he had been as welcome a devotee at the shrine of either Mesdames *Pitt*, *Finch*, or *Charlotte Muir*, as the first and the grandest. If our heroine, however, thus forfeited the *delicate* and *susceptible* friendship and protection of Mrs. *Weston*, she still retained a steady friend in the person of royalty.

Thus discarded from *Berkeley-Street*, she went to *Curzon-Street*, and Mrs. *Pitt* emigrating from thence about that time, they lived together in the same house, where, for some considerable time, occasionally there, or at the watering

ing places, as the seasons suited, they distinctly carried on an indiscriminate course of gallantries. She roved, like the Arabian courser, unbridled and unrestrained, 'till, she at last met with Capt. C—ks—n, with whom she has now cohabited many years, and who furnished her a genteel house, in *Margaret-Street, Cavendish-Square*, where she still continues to reside.

Thus far I have followed, and I think correctly so, Mrs. *S. Williams*, in the leading circumstances of her cyprian life; and I am happy to conclude, with this confident assertion——that not one of her sisterhood possesses a warmer heart, a more disinterested spirit, or a more rapid flow of tenderness and humanity.

Nancy George was one, I remember, a companion of Mrs. *Williams's* and at one time a more interesting creature scarcely ever breathed. Her features were regularly beautiful, and it was at *Brighton*, I believe, about the year 1788,
(when

(when with our heroine) that she was in the climax of her charms.

—————" Praising what is lost,
Makes the remembrance dear."

Therefore have I briefly taken the opportunity of introducing this once lovely creature's memory—for, perhaps, no *grave stone* tells where she *lies*!—a small *grassy hillock* only, may now cover those *remains*, which, when in a state of animation, elevated the soul to love and admiration.—I then will be thy memorialist, thou sweetest flower that ever budded in the field of beauty!—Oh! when I cast a reflection back on this once beautiful girl, who was untimely felled by the contaminating blast of curst prostitution, ere one-and-twenty * summers had flown o'er her lovely head, my blood recoils with pity and horror!—Accept this lesson then, from me, ye fair cytherian ones,—and by affording a few moments contemplation on the fate of poor

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Nancy

* She died in a deep decline.

Nancy George, who was wont to be the gayest and the fairest on the cytherian file, learn to avoid her early destiny;—for, if ye thoughtlessly hurry on in rapid and successive scenes of dissipation, like her, also, expect soon to lay mouldering in the grave, where you will will be consigned to oblivion.

Peace, then, to thy youthful manes! and may'st thou now breathe that celestial air, where base seduction, and that still baser female fiend—prostitution,—never more can poison and pollute thee.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Madame DERVILLE.

THIS fortunate lady was originally a figurante, at the Opera in *Paris*, and came to *England* a few years before the *French* Revolution. Here she continued some time much involved, and was in the greatest pecuniary embarrassments, till she found a temporary friend and protector in Lord *M-yn-d*. Thus assisted and enabled to appear a little more in the gay and gallant circles, she met with *J-ro-e C-ke*, Esq. with whom she lived two years, and in which period she brought him one child,

and for whose support he allows her £100. a year. This allowance on the part of Mr. C---ke remains optional. but has always been honorably and regularly paid.

The next gallant who stood forth, and still stands Madame *Derville's* protector, is Mr. *G-sl—g*, the banker. During this connexion. our Gallic heroine has considerably encreased the family of her *cher ami*, having produced him no less than four fine children.

Madame *Derville* is a woman of indiscriminate gallantry, and what is very natural, she displays a most decided and visible partiality for her emigrant countrymen.—These clandestine intrigues are carried on and supported, like the self-exhiled *reptiles* themselves—by dint of *English* gold. Our *French* heroine gives elegant dinners and superb suppers, at her house in *Great-Marlborough-Street*. — These *fellows* are the chief companions of her table, whilst *John Bull*, or *John* the banker, unwittingly pays for the

the luxurious entertainments, and unknowingly also, gorges the very *miscreants*, when it should have been long ago his most active endeavour,—his main point and policy—to have crushed and destroyed them.

But why should I descant on *policy*, when I am writing on a *French* subject?—On a *French* woman too—whose country-women are as far above our's in their love-intrigues, as the other sex are superior to our's in their political ones.

Madame *Derville* is far, very far indeed, from claiming the least distinction to beauty. She commands a dark penetrating eye, but from her forehead down to the lowest part of her neck, she is an intire composition of plaster of *Paris*.

“A woman that is like a German clock,
Still a repairing.”—

To make up, however, in some degree for the deficiencies of the face, she possesses the

most exquisite shape and figure. Her early profession has rendered her perfect mistress of the graces.—In company she is not only gay but sensible; her conversation is a treat and relief to the saturnine temper of an *Englisman*. Her disposition is naturally open, disinterested, and liberal; and one of Madame *Derville's* chiefest pleasures, *they say*, is—to comfort and assist the distresses and misfortunes of those, who, like herself, have experienced the keen edge of poverty and disappointment.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Mrs. SUMNER,

(Ci-devant Mrs. BREWER.)

MRS. *Brewer*, when very young, was married to Knight of the Razor, who lived in the same vicinity as her parents, and who used to deal in green-grocery, and other trifling articles, to make out an honest livelihood.—The Knight's ill treatment, however, soon expelled our heroine from her humble conjugal threshold.

From the brutal arms of an ignorant husband, I find her first transferred to those of a Gentleman, Mr. B—, from whom she received her Name, in the first walk she took in the sphere of gallantry, and which she retained for many years afterwards. Still conscious, however, that the rites of holy church had once made her a married woman, she yet assumed a virtue, though she had it not, and upon her separation from Mr. B——, passed as married, at a boarding-school, in *Norton-Street*, where she had taken lodgings, and which she furnished herself. Here she received promiscuous visitors, and whoever they might have been, still allowing them to be connexions of uncertainty, no doubt received from temporary difficulties and embarrassments, they nevertheless ruined the family who kept the school, and destroyed the school also, by infixing immoral and indelicate subjects in the satchels of the scholars. If Mrs. *Brewer*, however, was thus inadvertently the ruin of an innocent and industrious family, she made ample compensation for that ruin hereafter,

hereafter, which reflects the greatest credit on her character and humanity; and so far contrary to the many, who cannot bear the sight or mention of those they have injured, she has still preserved this injury so strong and extended in her imagination, as never to have lost sight of the innocent sufferers.

From the time of this lady's leaving *Norton-Street*, I have found her to be much perplexed and embarrassed.—Through the imposing and unprofitable channel of brokerage, she furnished a house in *Bond-Street*, for which she gave a bond, which bond produced a fresh combination of distress and ill-wayward fortunes.—

“ He that stands on a slippery place,
Makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up.”

So will a woman do any thing to escape from the horrors of a prison.—And here let me admonish this fair, and so subject to be imposed upon part of the sex, to shun the fatality of the

law, as they would the most pestilential disease; for when incircled within its dreary grasp,—then adieu to houses, settlements—and last and more sweet still than all—to liberty.

Mr. *A—d—s—n*, the Attorney, however, came forward on this occasion, and afforded Mrs. *Brewer* every assistance, both as a professional man and a friend.—This gentleman's character has gone through some scrutiny in the gay world, but we have always found him a steady advocate in the cause of his fair clients, and in general a very successful one.

In the very zenith, however, of Mrs. *Brewer's* distress, she fortunately chanced to fall in with Mr. *S—r*, the banker, who speedily relieved his fair mistress from all her embarrassments, and settled her happily and comfortably in *Spanish-Place*, where she assumed his name, which she retains to this very day.

To

To afford you some idea of the splendid manner in which Mrs. S—— lived in this place, I need only observe, that the furniture of the house, exclusive, of the superb looking glasses with which it was so profusely adorned, cost upwards of £1500.

If gratitude and generosity are among the fairest features of Mrs. *Sumner's* character,—constancy is certainly not a very prominent one. Women in her file of life, are of course, liable to repeated addresses—subject to every species of temptation,—particularly so, when they are taken under the protection of an affluent character,—trebly so, in fact, when this becomes known and circulated.—For a woman, though ever so fair and beautiful, in obscurity, may still continue so, neglected and unknown;—but when taken under the wing of fortune and of greatness, she is then sought after with as proportional avidity, as she was before disregarded and unnoticed. And, indeed, when thus elevated, she is set down as *fair game*, and it is

every man of fashion's ambition, in this instance, to make a cuckold of his friend; though, in my ungallant opinion. I would as soon treat that supposed friend as an enemy and a rascal, who made stolen love to my mistress, (he knowing and being hospitably introduced and avowedly to her as such) as he who clandestinely offered it to my wife.

Among the various suitors who courted and gained the caresses of Mrs. *Summers*, was the P—— of W——s, to whom it is said his Royal Highness was at times very much attached; and, as a proof, also of this attachment, the Prince made her a present of his picture, set in a style of the utmost elegance and brilliancy, and which she now carefully preserves as a memento of his esteem. Let all this, however, be as it may, here I must observe, without dwelling too minutely on Mrs. *Sumner's* minor gallantries, and also without derogating from [the amiable and generous personage just alluded to, that

S——

S——r might as well have been wronged by a French Priest as an English Duke.

Another gallant of Mrs. *Sumner's* was Mr. D——, who endeavoured, as far as his purse could go, to engross her affections, and to unite her to him in the bond of gratitude and love :— But the inconstancy of our heroine's heart could not suffer a place to be held there for love, though *gratitude* might have gained access by winks and starts.

Mr. D——, for many family reasons, was obliged to preserve this connexion as secret as possible ;—during the time, therefore, that Mrs. *Sumners* cohabited with him he supported her with the utmost splendour, presenting her with a carriage and a phaeton, to maintain a dashing appearance about town. This lasted, off and on, about a year, in which short time Mrs. *Sumner* could not have spent, or rather lavished away, less than £3000.

During

During the latter part, however, of this connexion, Mr. *D*—— began to perceive that he had too long been made a dupe of,—that her house resembled the court of *Comus*,—that other men shared his bounties,—engrossed his mistress's company,—and held unrestrained possession of the very house, the doors of which, when knocked at for admission, were grossly and inhospitably shut against his reception.—Nay, still further that when his ears were assailed with the loud yells of inebriety, and the rattling of dice boxes, he was told that his inconstant mistress was gone a little way out of town, and was not expected home that night.

But now to review Mrs. *Sumner's* character in another light :

I have mentioned that our heroine had made a grateful compensation to the woman who kept the boarding-school, in *Norton-Street*.—Grateful, indeed, it may be accounted, and which in a full measure atoned for the indiscretion

cretion and indistinction of her promiscuous gallantries. This lady, whose name was C—*Ac*, had received a fair and liberal education, —Mr. C— held a place in the Excise-Office, which produced a comfortable independency. but what with the above ill-chance and his death, soon after, the wife and children were reduced to beggary.

When labouring under this penurious disadvantages and embarrassments, Mrs. C— obtained the situation of a governess to two young ladies going to reside in *Jamaica*, and for the full maintenance of the respect and appearance of this station, she was genteely fitted out for the voyage by Mrs. *Sumner*; previous to her departure, also, she took the daughter under her protection, and got the son a snug birth at sea. This girl accompanied Mr. and Mrs. S— to *Spa*, where she formed an attachment with the groom of the former, to whom she was married on her arrival in *England*.

Mrs.

Mrs. C——, also, by this time had arrived from *Jamaica*, and as much embarrassed as ever; Mrs. *Sumner* again stood her steady friend, and advanced £100. to establish her again in a school, well-known once as *Gordon-House Boarding-School*. This scheme, however, thro' some cruel fatality, also failed:—Notwithstanding which, for whether failure or success had been the ultimate consequences, Mrs. *Sumner*, I think, amply attoned for the first injury she had been the innocent cause of, towards this unfortunate woman.—In this last instance she warmly manifested a high degree of friendship, perseverance, and generosity.

Previous to Mrs. *Sumner's* quitting *England*, for *Spa*, she left her mother in the care and possession of her house in *Spanish-Place*,—a mother that she had supported and protected since her first enrollment in the cytherian file.—This house, on her return, she immediately sold, and purchased another in *Queen-Street, May-Fair*.

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I next find our heroine with *Charles Calvert*, who having chambers in *Buckingham-Street*, in the *Strand*, she there took up her station with him. *Mrs. Sumner* then let, and still continues to let her house in *Queen-Street*, to a genteel family.—From these prudential schemes (such as furnishing houses, then disposing of them, and afterwards getting her gallants to re-furnish others,) this lady, perhaps, has prudently guarded against the day of neglect and adversity.

Mrs. Sumner has endeavoured of late to enroll herself on the *Cyprian* file by the name of *Mrs. Calvert*. The world, indeed, reports, that her extravagance in this quarter chiefly occasioned the distresses that afterward happened therein,—but it should consider, at the same time, that our heroine is now the stylish votary of *Cytheria*, and no longer the daughter of an obscure and humble costermonger.

There is something very engaging and prepossessing in *Mrs. Sumner's* face and figure, but
not

not approaching so far as to be accounted beautiful. She has a niminy piminy turn in her conversation, which, though it conveys an air of affectation, is far from ungrateful and unpleasing to the ear, when rendered familiar by being now and then in her fair society.

P. S. Mrs. *Sumner*, some years ago, when at *Ascot-Heath* races, was the innocent cause of a duel between Mr. *S——* and Col. *H——y A——st——n.*

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

Mrs. KNIGHT.

THE pretty little subject of this correspondence is a daughter of the tribe of *Judah*, and was born at *Bristol*.

Kitty Cowan, for this was our heroine's real name, disposed of sealing-wax, and little nick-nacks, common among the people of that persuasion, to the gentiles of *Bristol*. From thence she removed to *Bath*, where she was taken under the roof of a *Mr. Isaacs*, to act in

a menial capacity, and from whence she was seduced by an officer, who removed her to the metropolis, where he shortly after abandoned her.

In this forlorn and deserted situation, Mrs. Knight, (after having previously experienced many difficulties and embarrassments,) at last caught the observation and attention of *Harry K—*, from whom she took and continues her present name. This gentleman engaged decent apartmets for her in *Newman-Street*, where she brought him *une petite enfante*. The child died, and some disputes attending the expences and circumstances of the funeral, first became the fortunate means of her introduction to the acquaintance of Mrs. *Wyndham*, who had acquired some knowledge of her distressed situation, through the channel of Mr. K—, who then ranked high as a favorite in her file of gallants. Pity soon succeeded in the bosom of *Charlotte*, and with pity came protection;—for she immediately took Mrs. Knight under her own roof, and

and afforded her every comfort that the most liberal hand and heart could bestow.

Under the gay and hospitable wing of Mrs. Wyndham, our little heroine met with —— *Elt—n.* Esq. who removed her to *Ryder-Street, St. James's*, and with whom she lived nearly four years,—in fact, 'till he was married. By this gentleman Mrs. Knight has a child, for whom he allows the mother £200. a year, towards his present maintenance and future education. Previous to Mr. *E——*'s marriage, however, he situated his *chere amie* in an elegant country house, furnishing her at the same time with a superb wardrobe, sideboard of plate, &c. in fact, he liberally provided her with every article of life, that could tend to render her comfortable, independant, and happy.

After Mrs. Knight's necessitated separation with Mr. *E——*, I next find her settled in her present mansion in *Park-Street*, where she has still continued to reside. Here, it appears, she
was

was first under the protection of the Hon. Mr. *W—ll—p*, but his pecuniary circumstances being two limited to accord with the penurious disposition of our heroine, she soon found means to dissolve the connexion, and shortly after acquired a more affluent and consonant one in the protection of ——— *S—t*, Esq. with whom, we believe, she now, as it were, nominally lives, for the ill-natured world is pleased to say, that this fair daughter of *Judaism* will sacrifice her charms and caresses, as freely as any mercenary Swiss will his courage and life, for that power which is disposed to pay him best; or like her scriptural ancestor, *Iscaiot*, will betray her protector in exchange for a few pieces of gold.

When the smiles, nevertheless, of good fortune shone upon our heroine's head, and crowned her with affluence, she immediately settled her father and mother in a comfortable situation, at *Bethnall-Green*, furnishing the house, finding them in every necessary, and afterwards

afterwards settling a comfortable provision upon them, which, according to the present fortunate aspect of affairs, is likely to be continued for the remainder of their lives.

This, however, is not the only shining trait in our heroine's character, towards her poor relations, for, added to the above display of filial tenderness and regard, she also defrays the annual expences of her two brothers board and lodging at *Cambridge*, and also cloths and handsomely schools an only sister.—By these amiable and generous actions *Kitty Cowan* has rendered *Mrs. Knight* an object truly worthy of admiration among our sex, and a fair subject richly deserving of imitation among her own.

P. S. This lady lived some time, also, with *Mr. E——*, at *Bath*, where they passed under the name of *Moody*.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Mrs. ROBINSON.

TO distinguish this lady from our *English Sappho*, whose christian name is also *Mary*, and who will be introduced a future period in this work, it will be just necessary to call our present subject, in the first paragraph of her memoirs, by the distinctive appellation of *Mrs. P. Robinson.*

Our heroine's original name was *Mary Chantree*.—Her parents lived in very oppressed circumstances, in or about *Chandois-Street*, and what

what education she received was from the Parish School.

Mrs. *Robinson*, when at the age of sixteen was very tall, and possessed a most commanding carriage.—Her features were regular and beautiful—her teeth were like the finest ivory—and to follow the description of *Thompson* in a similar instance, she was

“ Young, fresh, and blooming like the morn,
—an eye, as when the blue sky trembles
through a cloud of purest white.”

The first happy lover who engaged the esteem and affections of our heroine, (as it is reported by some) was a *glazier* in the neighbourhood. She denies this, however, herself, and resolutely affirms, that she was never *framed* or *glazed* by this handicraft hero.

Whether this *derogatory* statement is true or not, I cannot pretend to ascertain, but true it

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certainly

certainly is, that she was carried off from her father's house by a married man, who had for some time haunted the old man's doors, to put this plan in execution. Their retreat, however, was discovered by the enraged parent, who, assisted by a posse of constables, regained his daughter.

Mr. and Mrs. *Chantree*, to prevent as much as possible this accident happening again, confined and locked her up in a garret.—But what are bolts and bars to a determined wench of sixteen?—mere spider webs!—at least so they proved in this instance, for *Polly* soon found means to effect her escape, and never returned to her parents afterwards.

Polly on her return, had it seems, forfeited all future pretensions to virtue, though it was strongly conjectured that she had forfeited them before the elopement.—Upon her mother's relating the distressing circumstances to her young neighbour, the *glazier*, he very pathetically con-
doled

doled with the poor woman, technically observing on the occasion—"That virtue was a very *brittle* commodity—that it was a *pane* which when once broken, could never after be *repaired*—and that all the *putty* in his master's shop could not *cement* chastity, when it had once received the smallest *fracture*."

Obscurity has drawn a veil over the first career of Mrs. Robinson's gallantries; nor was she particularly distinguished, till she became the *chere amie* of a Mr. R. a merchant in the City, from whom she took her name, and that name she has been known by ever since.

I never heard that our heroine ever took up her abode in any of the serails, though she was often pressed and solicited both by Mesdames *Weston* and *Johnstone*, to become a member, or rather a sacrifice, in their infamous dwellings.

With Mr. R. our heroine lived some time, but by a continued and complicated series of

absurdities and extravagancies, she made a considerable chasm in the merchant's purse.—They quarrelled, however, at last, about ordering a great coat which our heroine wanted, and from this trifling dispute they parted.

Mrs. *Robinson* by this time came to be known among the gay world, and by the favours of the Honourable *William P—g—t*, and other distinguished young Noblemen, she was enabled to set up a dashing equipage, and make a splendid appearance at *Newmarket*, in a curricule and a beautiful pair of bays.—On these occasions she always, very *prudently*, took with her, by way of companion, one of the ugliest of the whole cyprian squad she could possibly get; a woman, called *Buckhorse C—ke*, was generally selected for the purpose, who found it much to her *interest* to be made our heroine's foil on these occasions.

Mrs. *Robinson*, by these visits to *Newmarket*, acquired the esteem of the *P—e of W—s* and
his

his royal brothers—together with all the sporting nobility of the kingdom who resorted there. Being a woman of great *style* and *shew*, and possessing at the same time one of the most beautiful countenances that can possibly be conceived, she attracted the general attention and admiration of the whole court.—All were eager to participate in her favours, but the Prince engrossed the whole sway.—Besides, her pride and vanity then made her, at times, of such an irritable nature, that had a stranger attempted to offer his addresses, it was ten to one but he received a violent box in the ear for his insolence.—It is needless to add, after the partiality shewn to her by the Prince, and the first nobility, that she reaped a golden harvest by her excursions to *Newmarket*; nor had poor *Buckhorse* ever cause to repent of attending her thither.

Mrs. *Robinson* at one time lived with Capt. *A—h—d*, of the Guards, whose company being then stationed at *Windsor*, she accompanied him

thither. In one of her morning rambles she was accidentally met by a Gentleman, who was immediately struck with her beauty and figure; so much so, as to engage our heroine's particular attention.—On the following day she was waited on at the *White-Hart Inn*, by a stranger, who, after some pauses, hums, and ha's, asked the lady if she had any objection to receive a visit from a Nobleman of *distinction*, who would depend on her honor to keep the interview a secret. The lady, who is remarkable for her acuteness, immediately suspected the channel from whence the communication came, and whether it was from her violent attachment at the time to Capt. *A.* or the fear of a discovery, (for she was tolerably well watched during her continuance at *Windsor*) she declined receiving the visit—though I really believe, that if an opportunity had offered, her vanity and ambition would have easily prompted her to accept it.

Whether

Whether it was before or after these circumstances happened, that Mrs. *Robinson* lived with the son of Lady *A—S—ps—n*, I cannot say exactly; with this gentleman, however, who was then a minor, and a student at *Trinity-College, Cambridge*, she lived a considerable time. and to whom she was much attached. This attachment, in fact, had not only nearly cost her her life, but might have caused her lover's expulsion from College, for in one of her mad fits, when in a state of parturiency, she indiscreetly set off for *Cambridge*, and was seized with pangs of child-birth in a few hours after her arrival. I cannot describe the feeling of Mr. *S—n* on this occasion, when the affair was clandestinely conveyed to his knowledge.—He endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep the business a secret, and getting a surgeon to provide her with private lodgings, &c. she was safely delivered, and the child, very fortunately, (as things have since turned out) died a few days afterwards.

During the period that Mrs. Robinson cohabited (as it were) with Mr. S——, she carried on a multiplicity of intrigues, at her lodgings in *South-Moulton-Street*, where she figured for some time occasionally in her vis-a-vis and curricie. Her favourite female associates were the beautiful *Talbot* and the lovely *Nancy George*, both long since cut off by the inflexible *parcæ*.—When our heroine left Mr. S——, she removed from *South-Molton-Street* to *Wells-Street*, which was for some three or four years, as well known, and as much resorted to by *Men of Fashion*, as Mrs. *Weston's Serail*, in *Berkley-Street*.

The fellow who mastered this house, was a species of *Man-Bawd*, and at the same time a strong and zealous methodist.—A species of counterpart to Mrs. *Cole*, though certainly a more rigid attendant of the Meetings than she was supposed to be. But as the wretch is now dead, we will say no farther of him, particularly as he was not *conspicuous enough* to be placed
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in the niche of infamy, we promised to give our readers in the memoirs of Mrs. *Harrison*.

It is not many years ago, (if I may be allowed this digression, and in *Dublin*, if my recollection serves me truly,) that a bawd was actually burnt alive at the stake, for such infernal and infamous practices as are daily carried on by the living mother-hood in our Metropolis; and surely, if the arm of the law could exert itself so strongly *there*, why not exert a little more of its authority *here*?—A Mrs. *Ol—v—r*, or a Mrs. *J—hns—n* have deserved a more conspicuous situation in the pillory, than the less formidable procuresses of *St. Giles's* or *Drury-Lane*.—One or two *fashionable* examples should be made, to circulate a proper and general terror among the rest.—We now diurnally hear of our *wise and impartial* metropolitan magistrates, punishing the owners of Gaming-Houses in the severest manner, and of our *Touchstone jacketted* counsellors declaiming as severely against them at the bar.—Does the

Gaming-House bring the rash youth sooner to suicide, or the fatal tree, than the Bawdy-house? No!—they are kindred assistances—a monster with two heads and one body,—and the one should be brained as soon as the other.—The *Parisian* police, in these points, far surpassed our's in activity and severity.—But then, upon reflection it occurs, that the *prudent magistrate*, and the *wiser counsel* find not their way, with such secrecy to the one as to the other.—They *may* be known among the *many*,—whereas, at the house of intrigue they may be *private*, and slink away unnoticed;—and what their inclinations, joined to their *interest*, may condemn and persecute in *one* instance, their lust will lead them to connive at and approve in the other.

I am astonished when I hear a learned and retrograde counsel at our bar, declaim against *adultery*, as a monster with so many heads, when it may, perhaps, be easily authenticated, that he maintains his mistress, though not with as fashionable a degree of splendour as the dash-
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ing chariotteer,—for his *chere amie* on these occasions must be kept *snug*, on the score of *infallible reputation*.—To hear a man discourse, as he does, on morality, and the rigid obligations due to chastity, when he is perhaps then arrived warm from the embraces of a *mistress*,—is a play upon the world—a jest upon the Judge he addresses himself to,—and a most heinous offence to that Great Power, to whom he so often and so solemnly appeals.—It is a farce upon human nature, and a demonstrative, though pitious proof, how easily weak minds may be led away and betrayed, by the artful and insinuating powers of sophism.—With this *hypocrite* and compound of chicane, it may thus be truly said;

“I would not give, quoth *Hudibras*,
A straw to understand a case,
Without the admirable skill
To wind and manage it at will;
To veer, and tack, and steer a cause,
Against the weather-gage of laws,
And ring the changes upon cases,
As plain as noses upon faces.”——

Mrs. Robinson was frequently under the necessity of changing her lodgings in *Wells-Street*, for temporary ones in *Berwick-Street*, *Wych-Street*, &c. which are known to contain those snug places of involuntary rendezvous, vulgarly called—*spunging-houses*;—and it was in a house of this description, in *Berwick-Street*, that she very fortunately, and as accidentally met with *W—M—ll—sh*, Esq. with whom she cohabited afterwards for some considerable length of time.

This gentleman having occasion to call on a friend who was under a temporary embarrassment, in the same house, he chanced to meet our heroine on the stairs, as she was ascending to the dining-room—her usual apartment on these occasions.—Immediately struck with her beauty and elegant appearance, he as quickly entreated a few moments conversation.—This was at first haughtily refused, but being at last assented to, and all affairs soon made known, they were finally arranged and settled the next day;

day; Mr. *M.* discharging the fair captive's original debt, and all the detainers which had been lodged against her, amounting to some hundred pounds.

Mrs. *Robinson*, notwithstanding this, still continued much in debt, and fearful lest all her pecuniary embarrassments should come at once to the knowledge of Mr. *M.* she removed to elegant lodgings at *Brompton*, in order to screen herself awhile from her creditors.—But still when the day of protection from arrests arrived, she could not keep away from *Wells-Street*, and in consequence of being watched, and sometimes dodged by the bailiffs from thence in the evening, she has been obliged to conceal herself from their vigilance, for some time, under the stalls of *Carnaby-Market*.

The real situation, however, of our heroine's affairs being at length made known to Mr. *M.* he entirely settled them all, and presenting her
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at the same time with an elegant new chariot, and a pair of saddle horses, she once more sported her beautiful figure in the circles of the gay world.

After having confined herself for some time to the society of this generous friend, she chanced at last, like the majority of her fair and fashionable sisterhood, to make a necessitous favourite.—For him, it appears, she almost sacrificed every thing—and through him, in the end, she forfeited the protection of Mr. *M*.

The embarrassments that Mrs. *Robinson* experienced after this period, (forming an epoch of four years successively,) became so numerous and complicated, as to defeat the possibility of their being related in this work;—nay, if it were practicable, a series of distressing vicissitudes would not be very grateful to the feelings of sympathy and sensibility.

Suffice v

Suffice it therefore to say, that after our heroine had sought shelter and protection from her creditors, in *France, Edinburgh, &c.* for upwards of two years, she returned to the metropolis, and passing under a fictitious name, got her debts settled three different times afterwards, to the amount of £ 1500.—but as the characters who so liberally came forward on these occasions, were *all married men*, we shall, in justice to the feelings of some fair and distinguished females, pass over their names in silence.

Mrs. *Robinson's* extravagancies, however, increasing with her freedom, she at length found herself in the *Marshalsea-Prison*, which first introduced her to the knowledge and attention of Mr. C——bb, an attorney, who, after successfully defending her cause, he next discharged all her debts, which then had reached to the amount of £ 400. and with whom she now lives as Mrs. C.

It

It must appear very strange and surprizing, in what shape and manner our heroine could expend such vast sums of money; for comprehending the period she cohabited with Mr. *M.* to her first acquaintance with Mr. *C.* the total amount could not have been less than £ 15,000. Thus indeed it may be in some measure briefly accounted for.—Her beauty and style gained her credit unlimited, and her want of principle next got her into a prison;—to extricate herself from which, she generally paid sixty shillings in the pound.—A dear way of purchasing experience, but a lesson, nevertheless she could not profit by—a total deficiency of principle in her, blinding every avenue that led to prudence and reflection.

Long, long indeed, were the struggles that Mrs. *Robinson* made, to evade the arm of the law, till at length, we now find her under the protection of it; and, though she may be secluded from the world, and all its artificial gaieties,

gaities, still if she enjoys a moderate portion of content, her present state, let the individual be what he may, is far preferable to the former one.—A small competency of happiness and attachment, at all times, is superior to a series of continual dissipation and indiscriminate gallantry.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Mrs. ESTEN.

WITH what secret pleasure and interior delight did I sit down to transcribe the memoirs of a *Jordan*!—But here, what a painful contrast have I before me!—As I traced my page along, I found *one* all susceptibility,—goodness,—and humanity;—here I cannot discover a single trait of either,—her every feature, on the contrary, is shrouded in the sable covering of disgrace and infamy,—forming also an adscitious compound of unblushing pride and affectation.

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It is not only a delicate but a disagreeable task on our part, to enter upon the frowning and spacious field of censure and severity; but when the impartial reader recollects that Mrs. *Esten* has boldly entered into the lists *herself*, arrayed in the armour of consummate impudence, bearing on her arm the buckler of inveterate defiance, wielding o'er her Gorgon head the sword of glittering power, and pointing the spear of independent infamy against every moral tie and social duty, why then should not a champion be found to battle with her?

When I meet Mrs. *Esten*, I fancy that I can delineate, in her looks and manner, these expressions and sentiments: ——— ——— ———

“*Poor world, how I pity and despise thy malice and calumny!*”——And there is not the shadow of a doubt, but supported, as she is, by a strong understanding, and an uncommon portion of *sang froid*, vulgarly anglicized—*impudence*,—that she thinks as she looks,—and looks as she thinks.—This is a very happy disposition,—for a
callous

callous mind, as the world runs, is a far superior blessing to the one tortured by *susceptibility*.—Fancy still further leads me on to discriminate her sentiments flowing to this effect: —————
 —————“ Pshaw! the World! what care I for it,—its idle babblers,—or its hireling scribblers?—Do I not possess a settlement of £1000. a year from the house of *Douglas*?—Poor *sneaking World*, can'st thou *cancel this bond*?—Then 'till thou canst, rail on!!!—Have I not rivalled the most beautiful, amiable, and virtuous woman?—Banished her from the bed of her Lord,—and when my conceit did please me, did I not expel her from under the very roof of her own hospitable mansion?—*My ambition fires at the thought*!—World, thou hast snarled much at this,—but snarl on, —I care not, whilst thou cannot snarl away—*my bond*!—Though I live in *adultery twofold*,—am banished from all society and converse, save, indeed, my good and gracious Lord of *H*—————, still in him I in some measure find my passions *sensual* fed, and from his purse most princely do spring all
 the

the luxuries that this world of vanity and chicanery can yield.—Supported also, as I am, by an energy of mind that *I* will never suffer to be slackened or oppressed,—and animated by a spirit that no slander or malice can debilitate or unnerve,—the *World* may excrete its venom at me with freedom and in abundance:—copiously then let it flow, for it cannot *lave* away—*my band!*”

In the course of this work I have recommended œconomy, where extravagance has been found to predominate, and a little more liberality where extreme meanness has been discovered:—But what I am to recommend in this instance, I cannot say?—Firtue and modesty, perhaps, for profligacy and impudence. I might just hint this, indeed, but as it will be of no avail, the root being too staunchly soddened in corruption and infamy, I shall now proceed to give those materials I have collected of this lady's memoirs.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Esten* is a natural daughter of the late Admiral *Pye*, by Mrs. *Bennet*, a character well known in the literary world, for the various excellent novels she has produced:—Her *Anna*,—*Juvenile Indiscretions*, &c. all display a thorough knowledge of the world,—an acute discrimination, and at the same time exhibit distressed beauty and suffering innocence in the most amiable and pathetic colors:—But notwithstanding all the capability that this lady possessed to describe virtue, she has never been animated with one spark of it herself; and when I turn from her writings to her actions, it reminds me of an anecdote (closely analogous to herself in every point of view) related of *Colley Cibber* and the celebrated actress, Mrs. *Porter*.

“So well did *Cibber*, though a *professed libertine through life*, understand the *dignity of virtue*, that no comic author has drawn more delightful and striking pictures of it. Mrs. *Porter*, on reading a part in which *Cibber* had painted virtue in the strongest most lively colours

colours, asked him, how it happened, that a man who could draw such admirable portraits of goodness, should yet live as if he were a stranger to it?—"Madam," said Colley, "*the one is absolutely necessary,—THE OTHER IS NOT.*"

In 1784 Miss *Bennet* was married to Mr. *Esten*, purser of a man of war—For five years they lived together in a domestic and happy state, and two children were the fruits of this union; but Mr. *E*—, in 1789, finding himself considerably embarrassed, Mrs. *Bennet* prevailed upon him to sign a *deed of separation*, in consideration of which she was to extricate him from his difficulties, and to transmit him an annual allowance whilst he should remain in *France*.

From Mrs. *Bennet's* disposition towards literature and fiction, the drama naturally came often under her consideration; and from her mother, Mrs. *Esten* imbibed an attachment towards this favourite amusement, which her circumstances

- cumstances soon suggested to her the probability of turning to pecuniary advantage.

The riches and reputation to be acquired on the stage, have dazzled and deluded the fancy of sounder head than Mrs. *Esten's*, and therefore we need not be surprized if she determined on a pursuit which not only promised the possession of those, but also the greatest admiration of her beauty—a passion almost inseparable from the female sex.

Mr *Dawes*, a gentleman of the long robe, was the first before whom she rehearsed in private, with a view of becoming a public performer. Prepossessed, perhaps, by her personal charms, he pronounced highly in her favour. Others saw and approved her talents; and as the last step towards her becoming an actress, she was introduced to Mr. *Harris*; but his opinion of her abilities was not encouraging enough to bring her forward in *London* even upon trial. She was, however, recommended to *Bath*, where
she

she was assured of an opportunity of becoming a candidate for dramatic fame.

Upon the speculation of her daughter's abilities, Mrs. *Bennet* took a house in that fashionable city, and Mrs. *Esten* made her *entre* upon the stage as *Belvidera*, about five or six years ago. She dressed the character in a most picturesque and elegant manner, and, aided by beauty, she made a very favourable impression on the *Bath* audience: she continued to perform in that city and *Bristol*, for a season or two, where she had an abundance of managerial aid; but her benefit at *Bristol* happening to fall upon the night of a day in which there was a grand sailing match, the aquatic diversion so materially diminished the theatrical in point of spectators, that instead of clearing, she lost money by the night.

Whether Mrs. *Esten's* benefit was fixed for this unfortunate night by accident or design, we cannot state; but she attributed it to the latter;

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and

and all the eloquence and virulence of her mother's pen were immediately engaged to interest the people of *Bristol* in her favour against the managers: but the effect failed,—and after such hostility it may naturally be concluded that *Mrs. Esten* was discharged.

Her abilities, although they then were by no means so deserving of admiration as they are now, were sufficiently eminent to procure her an engagement in *Dublin*, where her very looks must have made the manager her friend. At this time her mother taught her in every point the art of succeeding; from the penciling of the eyebrows and eye-lashes, the beautifying her face, and the moving her arms, to the manner of speaking the most difficult passages in *Shakspeare*. By practice, and the instruction of *Mrs. Bennet*, she greatly improved her talents, and was soon afterwards engaged for *Edinburgh*, where she was received one scarcely inferior to *Mrs. Siddons* or *Mrs. Jordan*.

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Her very great fame at *Edinburgh* soon reached *London*; and although Mr. *Harris* was not much inclined to alter his first opinion of her, yet he agreed she should have a trial: and Mrs. *Esten*, relying with the greatest confidence on her own abilities, thought there only wanted a trial to confirm her superiority. Accordingly she made her first appearance in *London*, at *Covent-Garden Theatre*, October 1790, in the character of *Rosalind*, in *As You Like It*; and her success was so extremely flattering, that it justified her most sanguine expectations. The prodigality of applause gave hopes that she would draw crowds during the season, but her attraction continued a few nights only. She attempted the favourite and various characters in which Mrs. *Siddons*, Mrs. *Jordan*, and Miss *Farren* were most admired, and although she fell short of all those great actresses, yet her performances were much above mediocrity. She performed during the whole season without receiving any salary, but with the indulgence of appearing in what ever characters she chose; and towards

the conclusion, in addition to a tolerable share of public esteem, she received a *free Benefit*.

But with all this success her talents were not thought sufficient to procure her a handsome engagement in *Covent-Garden Theatre*, and she at this time would probably have been in *Dublin* or *Edinburgh*, had it not been for the friendship of *Mrs. Jordan*. Every exertion was made by *Mrs. Esten's* friends to influence the Managers in her favour; and although she had some noble patrons, yet the object was not accomplished, until *Mr. Coutts*, the Banker, requested the Duke of *C——ce* to write to *Mr. Harris* in her favour. His highness consulted *Mrs. Jordan*, whose natural disposition prompted her to serve our heroine, and the Royal letter was not a simple recommendation;—it had the desired effect, and *Mrs. Esten* was engaged at eleven pounds per week.

This lady was so great a favourite, and had so many friends in *Edinburgh*, that the Theatre in
that

that city being to be disposed of, a warm contest arose between the great personages who rule the Drama there, whether Mrs. *Esten* be the Manageress or Mr. *Stephen Kemble* the Manager. It has been since accomodated. Mrs. *Esten*, for a valuable consideration, relinquished her pretensions, and Mr. *Kemble* is now Manager.

Though rather small, yet Mrs. *Esten*'s person is extremely neat; and in men's cloaths she is very well, although she would be much better if at the knees her limbs were more straight.— Her face is beautiful, and she is perfect mistress of the use of a fine pair of eyes, which, those who pretend to be in the secrets of the toilet say, she heightens greatly by the exercise of art upon her eye-brows and eye-lashes, and the languishing rollings of which every one who has been near her must acknowledge the charm. Her voice, like Mrs. *Siddons*'s, is well caculated for Tragedy, but is not sufficiently feminine for the gay scenes of the Comic Muse: her action and deportment are graceful and easy, and her articula-

tion and comprehension of the sense of the author deserves great commendation. But for most of those qualifications she is principally indebted to the judgement and drilling of her mother, who is a woman of more than common shrewdness and ability. Those who saw Mrs. *Esten's* debut at *Bath*, were astonished at her after excellence; and those who know both her and Mrs. *Bennet*, ascribe it wholly to the instructions of the latter.

It is not our design to blame performers for using every fair means of enhancing their value, but when they attempt to pull down others, for the purpose of raising themselves, they certainly deserve reproach. The fulsome panegyricks on Mrs. *Esten*, published daily in the public prints, might here have passed unnoticed, were it not, that, in order to give lustre to herself, she is reported to have encouraged the sully of Mrs. *Jordan*. If this be true, we can only account for it in the piece of service conferred on Mrs. *Esten*, by Mrs. *Jordan's* interference with a Royal Duke in her favour; for nothing is more
just

just than the old maxim, that we often hate those to whom we are obliged.

And since the subject of Newspaper panegyric, vulgarly called *puffing*, is started, we will here relate an occurrence in general circulation, which may, for aught we know, be more entertaining than true.—Some time ago Mrs. *Bennet* drew up a very elaborate eulogium upon her daughter's performance of a new part, and sent it to a confidential print, long before the curtain had risen, with the promise of *three* guineas for its insertion; and it appeared accordingly next day:—But a critic, who had gone to see the play in the way of business, added to it great praises on Mr. *Lewis* and Mr. *Quick*.—This displeased our heroine and her mother so much, that they refused to pay more than *one* guinea, and referred to Messrs. *Lewis* and *Quick* for the other *two*.*

And

* For the heads of Mrs. *Estlin's* dramatic career the Author is indebted to the Editor of the "Secret History of the Green-Room."

And now having thus far pursued this woman down the stream of her public or rather her theatrical life, I have only to lament with many more, that fortune had not confined her to a situation where she possessed both talent and opportunity to render herself an object of attention and esteem;—but having abandoned this track,—a track so successfully formed for her, by the finesse and ability of her mother,—she has now established—an hereditary infamy,—by an abetted stroke of the most subtle policy has dispossessed herself of a burthensome husband, that she may live with more security in a state of adultery,—has spread the widowed caul over the head of the most amiable woman in *Scotland*,—and, lastly, has made herself an object of universal antipathy.

P. S. Mrs. *Esten* sports the Ducal coronet on her chariot, and has an elegant town residence in *Half-Moon-Street*, where she lives in splendid infamy.

END OF PART I.

